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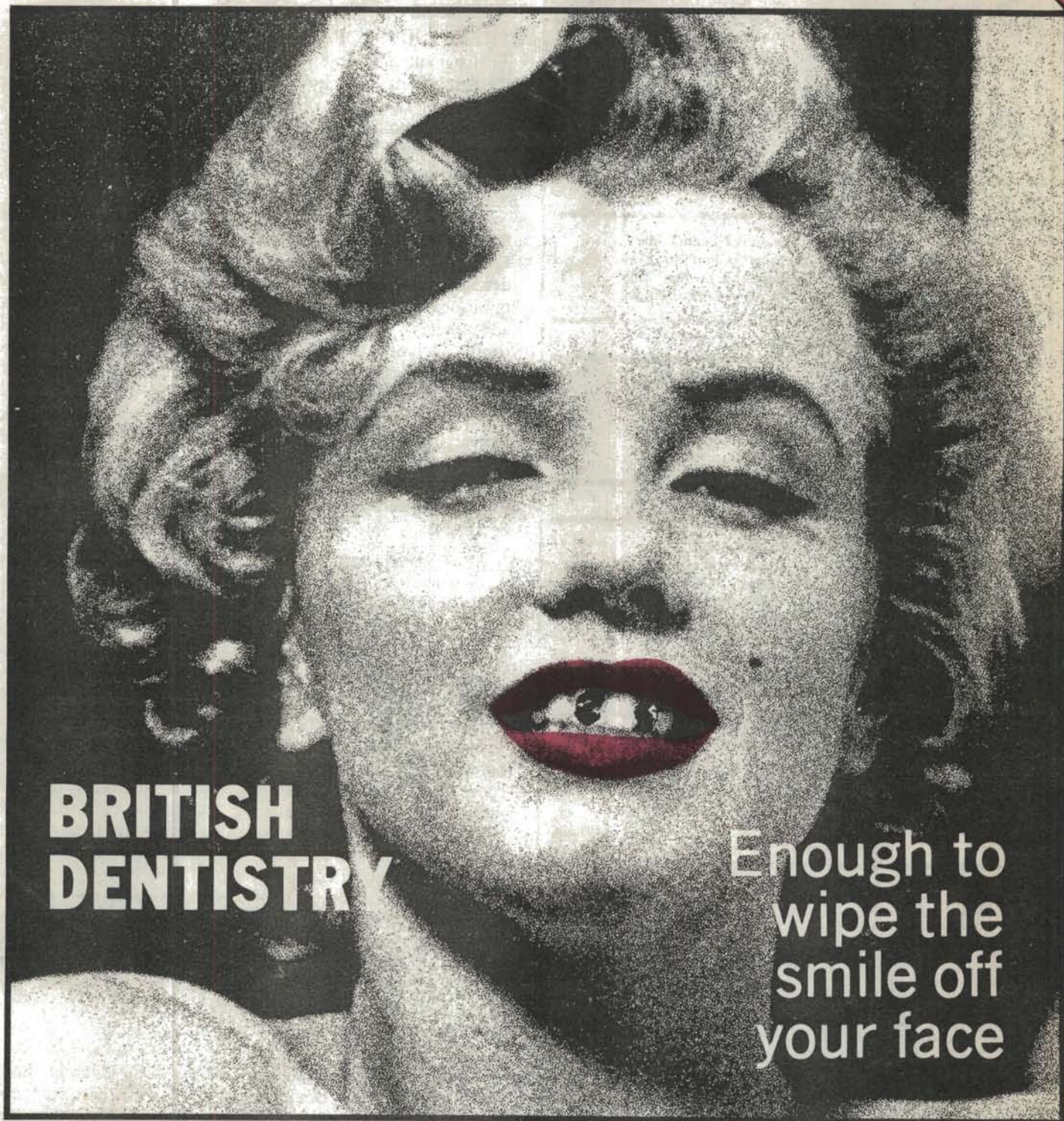
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The cost of your caries

Look out, the government is bad for your teeth. **Joan Smith** reports

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Vol 110

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16 August 1985

Councils avert the campaign-cap

THERE ARE PROBABLY few things which have irked Mrs Thatcher and her team so much in their trips through London as the flamboyant publicity from the GLC pointing out that the majority of Londoners disapprove of the government plans to extinguish London's elected authority. Clearly, for a party with an overwhelming majority in parliament, interpreted as a mandate to do whatever they like with any branch of government, such institutional flouting of their will has been intolerable.

The decision to set up the Widdicombe committee to examine the workings of local government is not contentious (though hiving off finance from its remit should have been). But the decision of the government to press for an interim report, published last week, on the specific question of political advertising is. They must have hoped that all right-minded people, including the five on the committee, would declare those more flamboyant and contumacious campaigns out of order. What rate-capping had failed to achieve in circumscribing the powers of local government, a new form of politics-capping would deliver. The restrictions would be enshrined in legislation planned for the next parliamentary year.

The Cabinet must have been disappointed, though they disguised it well. According to Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary:

The Committee recognise that rate-financed publicity campaigns by some local authorities raise serious issues of propriety. They have concluded that this is an abuse that needs to be dealt with.

The committee concluded no such thing. It was at pains to stress, at several points in the report, that local government publicity 'even if it deals with matters of political controversy or reflects the political views of the majority party' is quite permissible. Certainly some campaigns, specifically those that featured actual politicians, offended the taste of some committee members. They pored over the problem for some paragraphs — but reached no conclusion. They point out that there is no clear evidence of public distress at such campaigns, and note in passing that the largest single number of complaints on political advertising received by the Advertising Standards Authority were against the publicity to sell off British Telecom.

More seriously, the committee gave full consideration to the Conservative Party's most favoured proposal: the establishment of a new Regulatory Body to vet or adjudicate on local authority publicity for bad taste, party political leanings, or favours to particular racial, sexual or industrial groups. Again, they presumably could not get committee unity on the matter, for no recommendation is made.

BUT AS THE committee recognised, and as Sir Lawrence Boyle elaborates on in his memorandum of dissent, the question of publicity is a symbol of a much wider political question: the role of local government in relation both to the public and to national government at a time when political consensus has 'narrowed'. In the face of this, the issue of publicity is relatively simple to resolve. The Widdicombe committee has done so by recommending how to clarify existing law on the basis of a consensus against party political advertising by councils. (And Labour activists, anxious

to boot their party into a campaigning role instead of depending on council officers and finances might welcome this.)

In this interim report, the committee recognises that a new role for local government, as the voice of a local community, deriving its authority to act from that community, has developed. This, as opposed to municipal pride, is a relatively new notion in British politics, and certainly not one entertained by the Webbs in their classic review of the subject. Had it not been for this government, local politics would still have become, in the 1980s, an arena for new political battles. But these would have tended to be between a liberal notion of community as a class-free entity, the old Left notion of centralised planning to ensure equality of provision, and the new Left notion of favouring small communities, disadvantaged by race or sex etc, within a larger society.

As it is, this government has provoked local authorities into a different conflict; the councils have taken on the job of being the main check against the overweening powers of central government. It is this issue which the Widdicombe committee fails to bring out. It will be going on to look at the balance of efficiency, democracy and accountability that must be the basis of the workings of local government, as well as at the thorny question of whence local government derives its authority. But if its final report is to be coherent and a landmark in the history of local government reports, it cannot afford to shirk the conflict which increasingly dominates politics today: the power of central government over all other forms of executive and civil power. □

Greater and gooder

THE BBC AFFAIR opens up the whole can of worms of Prime Ministerial and ministerial patronage and it would improve the political health of the country if this aspect stays firmly on the agenda. Labour has naturally been murmuring — should it get back into office in time — about possibly dismissing BBC chair Stuart Young, if it is legally possible; and Gerald Kaufman, as shadow Home Secretary, has been quoted as promising 'a review of the membership' of the board of governors. Very proper emotions, but they only reflect the anxiety that MPs in opposition invariably feel, that there should be no diminution in the raw executive power that will be theirs when Buggins at last gets his or her turn. Those of us who want Labour in but will not be Prime Minister or Home Secretary can perhaps take a more measured view, and not only about the BBC and its 'politicised' governors.

We said immediately after the banning of the *Real Lives* documentary that the behaviour of this generation of BBC governors 'has resulted in limitless damage to public confidence that the entire class of "great and good" understands what is demanded of it'. Many people are of course incredulous at the idea that *anything* resembling a list of 'great and good' can continue to be tolerated. Who, except conservatives with a small 'c' at best (regardless of nominal political allegiance), would ever make it to such a list, they ask? Yet the reality of public administration, pending either the one-party state or the withering of the state, is that hundreds of positions supposedly undertaken 'in the public interest' (however high the fee) will require to be filled by Kinnock and his team during the next five-year Labour administration; and by every successive government thereafter.

Either Labour must go down Thatcher's road — as Kaufman in his first annoyance seemed to imply it will — and pack the 'great and good' offices (nationalised industries, Arts Council, IBA, BBC, EOC etc) with what the fabulously corrupt 18th century House of Commons called 'placemen'. Or the next Labour government can try to put the clock back, and in saintly fashion resume making such appointments as Harold Wilson did in 1967 with the 'cross-bench' choice of Lord Hill, former Conservative

minister, for BBC chief. (A terrible appointment in itself, it did at the time seem to acknowledge the theory that the name of the 'best person' goes to the Queen, and not just the nearest-to-hand party-political supporter).

Why, however, when Thatcher runs her course, should — how indeed *could* — Labour unilaterally go back to a notion of governing-class persons capable, like so many Speakers, of suppressing their old political friendships and debts the instant they are translated into roles such as the leadership of broadcasting, the arts, or industry? If two Conservative administrations have indeed politicised every such appointment for good, then Labour can't just go back to the Ark; nor will Labour's supporters want to go without their revenge.

But the concept of 'the public interest' still persists, however much we all differ in defining it. And public expectation still persists: that public bodies do not *all* function as the fingers — tentacles would be the emotive word — of central and necessarily party-political government. Labour will do itself no good if it is seen to be Thatcherism in reverse, Tory authoritarianism with the coat merely turned inside out. In that whole system of patronage devolved from the Crown and now wielded with such sectarian joy by Thatcher and her Cabinet, what is needed is an obstacle-course between the choice of a name by the executive, and that moment when it goes forward to the Queen (or simply through on the nod). Only one obstacle-course would already fit easily into the Parliamentary system. There ought to be a Select Committee on Patronage. Yes, it would reflect, as Select Committees do, the governing majority in the House; but yes its proceedings, the difficult questions asked and the answers, ought to be televised. Men like Stuart Young of the BBC (or MacGregor of British Steel, the NCB and fabulous fees) would have been cross-examined in public before they took office. And good Labour appointments need not fear the same. □



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BSC RESTS ITS AXE ON RAVENSCRAIG'S NECK

SCOTTISH reaction to 7 August's BSC: *The Future*, the plan for British Steel Corporation released by the government, is generally that it amounts to a death sentence on Ravenscraig works near Glasgow and the 20,000 jobs that depend on it. BRIAN WILSON reports

IN THE SHORTER term BSC's plan means the loss of over 700 jobs at Gartcosh cold strip rolling mill, which is scheduled to close at the end of March next year. This will allow BSC to 'load our other more modern, cold mills at Shotton, Llanwern and Port Talbot.' Gartcosh is easily Ravenscraig's biggest customer, so a limb is being amputated.

The increasing isolation of Ravenscraig is emphasised by the consolidation of BSC's South Wales operation, through the acquisition of Alphasteel in Newport — a remarkable piece of Conservative nationalisation which will lead to this modern plant being shut down, the hardware sold to a Third World competitor and much of the throughput transferred to BSC at Port Talbot.

Ravenscraig isn't to get the £90 million investment it urgently needs,

and so the three year 'reprieve' announced by BSC — greeted by George Younger, secretary of state for Scotland, as 'excellent news' — is inevitably seen merely as a stay of execution which just might see the government through the next election.

Local Tory fears

However, the Conservative prospective candidates association in Scotland has called for full-scale retention of the Ravenscraig-Gartcosh complex and for the £90 million investment. Sir Hector Monro, chair of Scottish Tory backbenchers, describes the BSC plan as 'astonishing', and says he'd been expecting an announcement of fresh investment at Ravenscraig.

For several reasons, Ravenscraig has become identified as a last frontier in what present economic policy can get away with in Scotland. Closure would be interpreted as an end to any pretence of regional policy, and as the death-knell to central Scotland's lingering status as a serious industrial area. Acceptance even by Scottish Tories that Ravenscraig's retention is absolutely vital is a tribute to the success of past campaigns to save the plant.

Chill calculation?

It now seems, though, that a cold political calculation may have been made. The Conservative Party has only 21 seats in Scotland, and the loss of another half-dozen or so might be thought unlikely to be decisive nationally. And the industrial lobby has long been telling Norman Tebbit as Trade and Industry Secretary that Ravenscraig must go to make BSC more competitive and keep industry's own costs down.

This case was succinctly put in evidence from the British Iron and Steel Consumers Council to the Commons trade and industry committee last year: 'The refusal to grasp the nettle of further capacity cuts would have very damaging consequences for BSC and its customers... that cannot be in the longer term interests of the UK.' Ravenscraig, the memorandum pointed out, was 'further from main markets' than the two Welsh plants.

Supporters of Ravenscraig's retention — and, in the shorter term, Gartcosh's — will argue a social case. They will claim that BSC has got its figures wrong and urge that capacity should be retained pending an improvement in world conditions. At the moment, however, industry's advice in the government's other, more receptive, ear seems to have prevailed.



John Sturrock/Network

WITH A SPATE of arson attacks on Asian homes and shops (NS 2 August) now causing high-level political concern; and a judge (see below) speaking out against street-harassment of Asians — newspaper handling of Asian 'stories' is of front-line concern to an embattled community

Asian women call for right of reply in the Daily Mail

THE EDITOR of the Daily Mail refused this Monday (12 August) to meet ten Asian women who picketed outside the Mail's London headquarters to protest against the paper's 'brides-for-sale' front page story of 5 August (see NS 9 August).

There was confusion about the venue and time of the picket, due to mistaken information given to local papers — some protesters were under the impression the picket was to be held on Monday morning. Others thought it was to be in the evening. Many of those who wanted to protest could not.

Led by the Immigration Widows Campaign, the picket included two Asian women — one from India and

the other from the Philippines — who have been fighting to live in Britain with the husbands of their choice, against the will of the Home Office.

The picket had an open letter for Sir David English, editor-in-chief of the *Mail*, and wanted to deliver it to him — but say he refused to see them. Staff on the news desk received the letter on Sir David's behalf, and promised to deliver it.

The letter spelled out what the immigration laws have meant to divided immigrant families and the sufferings these laws have been responsible for. It condemned the *Mail*'s 5 August front page story and accompanying leader, and described them as a slur on the Asian community. It demanded a right to reply, and allocation of the same prominence and space to a reply as was given to the original story.

The women are planning to take the matter to the Press Council and to contact the NUJ chapel if the *Mail* doesn't grant a right of reply.

Anwar Iqbal

Ongoing...

IN THE FACE of a threatened boycott by Scottish Labour councils (NS 9 August), Rank Xerox has reversed its controversial decision to withdraw from sponsoring the 1986 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. The company announced last Friday that it is recommencing negotiations with the Games organising committee over its proposed £600,000 sponsorship package.

Rob Edwards

THE ZIPPER gay bookstore trial (NS 9 August) has been postponed. Committal proceedings against four directors of Millivres, the publishing house that owns the shop, were due Monday 12 August, but have been put back to early October to allow the defence more time to prepare its case.

Jolyon Jenkins

● Last week's news story on the 'Baltic Question' wrote of 400 Finnish Communist MPs. That should have read 4. Apols.

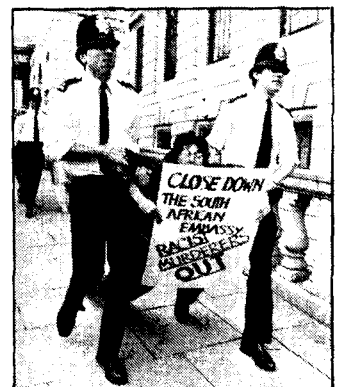
Judge speaks up for Asians in Newham

THE FOUR young Asians convicted in the Newham 7 trial (NS 19 July) were each sentenced to 100 hours of community service at the Old Bailey this Tuesday 13 August. Pervais Khan, Zaffar Khan, Mohammed Hanif, and Bahadur Khan were found guilty of affray. The four are going to appeal against the decision.

Judge Neil Denison QC spoke of 'long-standing and extreme provocation' against Asians and said: 'People in Newham committed far worse offences than you have and they are still at large. I hope you can assist in bringing them to justice.'

Pervais Khan, allegedly beaten by officials inside the Old Bailey during the Newham 7 trial, after refusing to eat a pork pie, is to sue the Home Office.

Zubaida Motala



Paul Marston

UNDER the gaze of the tourists who, lousy weather permitting, throng Trafalgar Square, arrests continue outside South Africa House. Last Friday evening (9 August) 29 were hauled away from the weekly City of London Anti-Apartheid Group picket of the South African embassy. 27 people have been charged with obstruction of the highway; no charges were pressed against two juveniles. As it happened, 9 August was South African Women's day — 20 of the arrested activists were women.

'Sally Army' wages New Zealand war against gays

THE NEW ZEALAND branch of the Salvation Army, offshoot of the organisation founded in Britain in 1865 by General Booth, is leading a campaign to stop New Zealand's Labor government ending the country's current total legislative prohibition on male homosexual behaviour.

The 'Sally Army' has been in the forefront of attempts to obtain one million signatures, out of an NZ population of three million, on a petition against junior Labor minister Fran Wilde's Homosexual Law Reform Bill, introduced this March and now in Select Committee. The bill would add freedom of sexual orientation to New Zealand's Human Rights Act, and set a male gay age of consent of 16 (cf 21 in the UK).

A Toronto conference of the International Association of Lesbians, Gay Women and Gay Men (IGA — based in Amsterdam, but the result, as it happens, like the 'Sally', of a British initiative) heard last month that between \$3 million-\$5 million is currently being funnelled from North America to fundamentalist Christian groups in New Zealand.

New Zealand's current legislation (the 1961 'Crimes Act') forbids all homosexual contact between men, and provides for a maximum of five years jail for 'indecent' between men, and a maximum of seven years for 'anal contact'. Provision of

'facilities' for commission of homosexual acts can be punished with up to seven years imprisonment. Homosexual acts between women aren't mentioned in law.

Queerbashers' empire

The total criminalisation of male gays in New Zealand is by origin a relic of 'copycat' legislation under the British empire replicating — eg in Israel under the Mandate — the British 'Labouchère amendment' of 1885 (see also Alison Hennegan this issue p 15). In the case of England and Wales (subsequently in Scotland and Northern Ireland) the law was ameliorated by the Wilson Labour government as long ago as 1967, tardily following the 1950s Wolfenden Commission.

This Friday 16 August could see picketing of 'Sally Army' HQ in a number of capitals worldwide, the IGA having nominated 16 August an 'international day of action in defence of the New Zealand bill'. In Edinburgh the Scottish Homosexual Rights Group (SHRG) plans to picket the Edinburgh divisional HQ of the 'Sally'.

The Salvation Army in New York has already fallen foul of Mayor Koch's administration, for discriminatory policies against homosexuals. Koch withdrew financial support 'on the rates'.

Ian Dunn



GOVERNMENT BLUE-PENCIL

YOU SEE that funereal black space, that midnight-gloom rectangle over the front entry? It's the government blue-pencil (black-pencil in fact) at work well ahead of the Widdicombe report on local authority publicity (see our Editorial page 2).

The picture is of London's Hackney town hall, and appears in a Department of Energy publication, *Energy Efficiency and Local Authorities, A Good Practice Guide*.

There's a foreword by Energy Secretary Peter Walker, who isn't, lamentable thought, blacked out, but grins from the opening page.

So what's missing? Why, the Hackney unemployment figures — which the Widdicombe report is by no means certain would be wrongful local authority advertising. As of this week, the space should read 20,522 (one in five of the borough's working age population).

Rob Edwards

MISCELLANY

Oracular strip-cartoon

Has Jane abruptly lost interest in Sir Clive Sinclair? Remember how, by the strangest of coincidences, *Mirror* readers were afflicted with paeans of praise for Sir Clive and the computer age in the *Jane* strip-cartoon this summer, just as *Mirror* publisher Robert Maxwell was headlining himself as rushing to a £12 million

surely? — can go adrift at the *Tablet*, where he's a trustee, or at the *International Committee of the Pontifical Council for Culture*, on which he sits. Or at the antiquarian bookshop he owns in Pall Mall? Don't tell us if prices for antiquarian books are falling. We don't want to know.



rescue of Sinclair Research (*Miscellany* 12 July)? And how on 19 July, in this column, we forecast that given the questionmarks over Sinclair's affairs Jane might go off Sir Clive? Well, with effect 3 August Jane seemed to turn a sociopolitical somersault, for since then she has been desperately concerned, while still losing her clothes all the time, about a young car worker put out of work by automation. Jane hasn't had a loud fit of praise for computers since 1 August, and her last glowing tribute to the great inventor ('S'amazing what people like Sir Clive Sinclair have done for the human race') was on 30 July. Maxwell admitted last Friday 9 August that he's given up his scheme to rescue Sir Clive.

Rees-Mogg alert

Some chaps are just plain unfortunate, and that's the truth of it — no fault of their own. But what a lot of rocking rafts, if not perhaps sinking ships, there seem to be wherever the excellent Sir William Rees-Mogg goes. His editorship of *The Times* concluded (1981) with the paper falling into soon-to-be-American hands, viz. Rupe Murdoch's. Off, very creditably, he immediately went. But since then the Arts Council under his chairpersonship practically turned turtle on accusations that he doesn't fight as he should for its funding. Now there's the spectacle of the BBC governors, of whom he's deputy chair, drowning under seas of no doubt improper abuse on charges of censorship. And shares in GEC, of which he's a director, have halved in value in relation to the stock market as a whole since his election. (Profits announced last month were 'well short of even the most pessimistic analysts' forecasts' — FT). At least nothing —

Odd balance-sheet

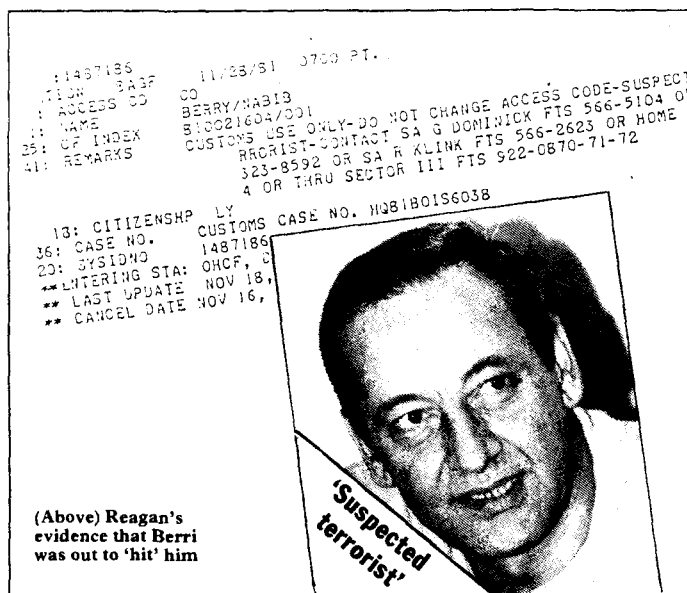
'When I was elected to the House of Commons my salary dropped by two-thirds. After tax, my Parliamentary income is equal to my kids' school fees. Working outside the House is an economic necessity.' So says hard-done-by Jeremy Hanley MP (Con, Richmond & Barnes) in the latest issue of *Account*. The magazine continues: 'He reckons these financial realities explain two striking features of the House of Commons today: the strikingly low number of accountants represented and the growing trend for MPs to supplement their salary with business consultancy work.' For the record, the proportion of accountants in the Commons is about 2.2 per cent. That's the same as in the last Parliament, and a situation which the most famous chartered accountant of them all, Cecil Parkinson, has expressed himself well pleased with. As for 'strikingly low': the proportion of accountants in the working population as a whole is about 0.6 per cent — so there are four times as many accountants in the House as there ought to be.

Not that we care

Remember how in the autumn of 1983 and the spring of 1984 the *Sunday Times* regularly boasted on its front page how its circulation and readership were rising inexorably under the tutelage of Andrew Neil, the then-new editor? He seems to have settled down since then. No front-page fanfares greeted the latest six-monthly circulation figures, for the first half of this year. For the record: the ST sold an average of 1,257,709 copies a week. That's the lowest figure for 21 years.

Remarkable fact

If you're the National Front complaining to the Lord Chancellor and Home Secretary on 15 April about the Panorama programme *Maggie's Militant Tendency*, this (dated 10 June) is the Home Office answer you get: '... it is an essential principle of the broadcasting policy followed by successive governments that the broadcasting authorities should be left to manage the conduct of their day to day affairs free from government intervention. It would be inconsistent... for the Home Secretary... to comment on particular programme decisions...' Signed: Miss S A Fryd.



(Above) Reagan's evidence that Berri was out to 'hit' him

TALE OF ANTI-REAGAN HIT TEAM WAS 'FRAUD'

AN INTERNATIONALLY publicised accusation that a Libyan-financed hit team tried to enter the United States to assassinate President Reagan in November 1981 is shown to be absurd by a document obtained by the *New Statesman*. The document — a secret, official US list of fourteen so-called Libyan terrorists on a mission to kill Reagan — is in fact a list of prominent members of the Amal, the Lebanese Shi'ite party who most recently helped Reagan negotiate the release of the US hostages in Beirut.

The 'hit team' story was officially confirmed by no less an authority than Reagan himself. Questioned about Libyan assassination squads at a televised press briefing on 7 December 1981, Reagan told the world's press: 'We have the evidence and he (ie, Qaddafi) knows it'. Strenuous denials by Qaddafi were laughed off, and were of no avail in killing the story. US national security advisors then started to plan economic sanctions against Libya.

Reagan's 'evidence' of a hit team on its way to kill him is contained in the message listing fourteen alleged terrorists, which was flashed to US ports and airports on 28 November 1981. In the message, the US Customs Service warns officials to report immediately any attempt to enter the US by 'hit team' members. The telex, from Customs Service Commissioner Edward M Ellis, warned all recipients that the information was 'extremely sensitive'.

In fact, it was extremely silly. Top of the list sent by the US was the name of Nabih Berri, the leader of the Amal party, and the present Lebanese

Minister of Justice. Number two on the list was the religious leader of the Lebanese Shi'ite community, Mohammed Shams-e-din. Further down the list was the present Speaker of the Lebanese parliament, Houssein Housseini (misspelt as Hassan Housseini).

Far from being a group of young Qaddafi-financed zealots, all but one of these alleged assassins were aging Lebanese politicians of the Amal party, whose members bitterly hate Colonel Qaddafi. (The fourteenth was an aging West German.) The Amal party's founder, and Berri's predecessor as leader, Moussa Sadr, disappeared (believed assassinated by Qaddafi) during a visit to Tripoli in 1978, an incident Amal members have not forgotten. Qaddafi has since financed a particularly murderous rival Lebanese Shi'ite sect to the Amal, the Hizbollah.

'Against lawlessness'

By the bloody lights of Lebanese politics, Berri and his party are moderates. Even before joining the government, Berri took a strong stand against terrorism and lawlessness during the protracted Lebanese civil war (as we reported in an NS profile on 28 June 1985). It is wholly inconceivable that Berri, or any of the other named members of Amal would act as freelance international terrorists, least of all at the behest of Libya.

Middle Eastern specialists are astounded that the story could have been given credibility in the US, particularly in as prominent quarters as the Jack Anderson column on the *Washington Post*. In mid-October, soon after the US shot down two Libyan jets in the Gulf of Sidra, Anderson reported that the US

National Security Agency had intercepted a telephone conversation between Qaddafi and President Mengistu of Ethiopia, in which Qaddafi spoke of intending to assassinate Reagan.

About a month later, according to US researchers, a Lebanese drugs dealer sold the US Drugs Enforcement Agency officials the 'hit team' list, in return for immunity and a large sum of money.

The only note of caution on the entire story was sounded by the FBI. Obviously unwilling to directly contradict the President's bold assertions about Qaddafi, FBI director William Webster said a month later that 'if a Libyan "hit squad" entered the United States, the FBI has never confirmed it.' Intelligence sources gave conflicting reports as to how many informers had supplied the information, with numbers ranging from one to ten.

This week we pressed Customs service officials at the US Embassy in London, representatives of the State Department in Washington, and the US Secret Service (responsible for presidential protection) to explain how the administration gave credence to such bunkum. A White House Secret Service official claimed that 'We didn't put any stamp on it, though we were prepared.' No-one would discuss details of the list.

But the senior US Embassy Customs Service official in London demanded 'where the hell did you get that from?' when we asked about the document. He refused to explain the meaning of codes used on the telex message. 'You may be in serious trouble,' he added, 'holding a US Customs Service document'.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MoD Aldermaston outwitted by Greenham women

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE police have made strenuous, but unsuccessful, attempts to recover from Greenham women copies of a document which describes the security arrangements at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, Aldermaston. The document — the MoD's own Police Orders for the nuclear weapons design centre — gives full details of police operations at the base.

The three women who obtained the document, Lorna Richardson, Lynn Barlow, and Sue Kent, entered Aldermaston completely undetected last Friday morning (9 August). Even after an hour exploring buildings, including those handling radioactive materials, they were only found and arrested after they had chosen to

announce their presence on the base by telephoning the Press Association in London. The three were then charged with criminal damage for having painted huts with slogans, and released.

The MoD Police Orders were removed from the police office in which the three were held. But less than 12 hours later, after the missing document was noticed, one of the women, Lynn Barlow, was re-arrested at Greenham and questioned for 9 hours. She was released after returning to Greenham in order to hand over one photocopy of the document. But other photocopies had already been made.

The leaked Police Orders reveal the existence of an Aldermaston-based 'Special Escort Group' who are responsible for the security and safe delivery of 'SNM' in transit. SNM is Special Nuclear Material, a group of fissile radioactive elements or compounds which are the critical ingredients of all nuclear weapons. Several MoD police Inspectors run this group, which is fully armed and equipped with special vehicles and special HF, VHF and Multi-Channel radio equipment. Their operations are co-ordinated by the 'RA (presumably Royal Artillery) Movements Control'.

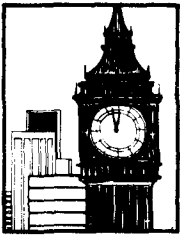
Armed police

All MoD police at Aldermaston are armed, except for guards on the main gate used by employees. The same police also guard two little-known but closely-related establishments, Boundary Hall and Blacknest. Blacknest, a nuclear test seismic detection site, is a few miles south of the main Aldermaston research centre.

Male MoD police carry a 9mm Browning, while female police carry a Walther PPK pistol. An Armoured Police Vehicle (APV), whose crew are armed with Sterling sub-machine guns, is also used to patrol Aldermaston at night. In case of 'extreme emergency', the base has a hot line to the Thames Valley police HQ at Kidlington, near Oxford. An armed 'Special Response Group' is also available on the base.

The document also confirms that despite copious 'Photography is forbidden' notices placed around Aldermaston's perimeter, taking photographs of the site from the public road is not against the Official Secrets Act provided that the photographer is not a *bona fide* (or *mala fide*) spy. MoD police are instructed to try and urge photographers voluntarily into police custody, and then to persuade them to hand over film from their camera 'in order to prove that their intent was not prejudicial to the interests of the State'.

The Ministry of Defence says that an investigation has been launched into the loss of the document, but refuses to discuss its contents.



PETER KELLNER

Cork's 'miracle': did Mary's statue really move?

Ballinspittle, County Cork

I HAD TO SEE IT for myself. For days the locals in West Cork had talked of little else. The area's daily newspaper, the *Cork Examiner*, had run ever more remarkable stories about it. Then London journalists started descending: Radio Four's *Today* programme ran a feature, and the *Daily Mail*'s star feature writer, John Edwards, was sniffing the air. From my backwater holiday retreat 40 miles away I decided that I could trust no one's eyes but my own. Did Ballinspittle's life-size stone statue of the Virgin Mary rock nightly of its — her? — own accord from the waist up, or not?

The saga of the statue began about a month ago in this village, 20 miles south of Cork. One evening, at dusk, Clare Mahony was passing Ballinspittle's grotto. She looked up from the road towards the statue, which was about 30 yards away, set in a nook high in the rocky hillside. The statue was illuminated by a halo of eleven lights. As Clare looked up, she was certain that Mary was rocking back and forward.

Clare told her mother and other villagers. They looked. They also saw Mary move. Word quickly spread. A short story appeared in the *Cork Examiner*. People came from other villages to see for themselves. They also saw the statue rocking to and fro. One or two people reported other movements: the twisting of Mary's body, a glint in her eyes, a gesture with her arms.

Within days thousands of people were visiting Ballinspittle nightly, some travelling hundreds of miles, to watch the statue from the road or from the field opposite. From ten each evening on, at 20-minute intervals, prayers were spoken over loudspeakers and most of the spectators-cum-congregation joined in. Seldom in the history of hail Marys can either the hails or the Mary have been quite so remarkable. Each night many people left Ballinspittle convinced that they had witnessed a miracle.

Two things then happened. First, Ballinspittle became a major provincial Irish news story. When one man with a history of heart trouble died one night as he prayed near the statue, his death became front page news. And second, the church hierarchy became distinctly edgy. Bishop Michael Murphy of Cork warned that 'commonsense would demand that we approach the claims made concerning the grotto at Ballinspittle with prudence and caution.' But the bishop added: 'I understand that crowds are gathering there in a great spirit of prayer. This is certainly a praiseworthy thing.'

As I have said, I had to see for myself. One evening I drove to Ballinspittle with my wife, her brother and his wife (both converts to

Catholicism and now living in West Cork). Before proceeding to describe what happened, I should perhaps add that the only drink I had consumed all day was a half pint of Guinness at lunchtime.

WE HAD TO PARK the car some 20 minutes' walk from the shrine. It was just after 10pm when we reached the point where thousands congregated each night. Stewards motioned us to join most of the other visitors by climbing the sloping field opposite the statue. This, however, meant staring at Mary from 50 to 100 yards away: much too far to observe anything clearly. So I explained to the steward that I was a journalist and he let me through to join those at the point on the roadside nearest to the statue — roughly where Clare Mahony had first seen it move.

I then stood and watched, trying to disregard the camera flashes and the wandering torch beams that interfered with a constant, careful view of the statue. (When the cameras weren't flashing and the torches were off, the only illumination of the statue came from Mary's halo. This meant that her head was well lit, her body above the waist moderately well lit, and the lower half of the statue and the rocks immediately behind only dimly lit.)

After adjusting for the light conditions, standing as still as I could, and trying to disregard the enthusiastic words of people near me, I came to my first clear conclusion of the evening: *the statue did appear to move* — to rock to and fro, just like the papers had reported thousands of other people saying it did. But why did it 'move'? I was sure it was not, as sceptics had suggested, mass hysteria. Some people may have gone to Ballinspittle wanting to 'see' Mary move. I did not; besides, I am not a Catholic. Either some curious optical effect was at work — or it was a miracle.

Unfortunately, the simplest way of testing whether the movement was real or not was not available. Nobody was able — to be more precise, nobody was *allowed* — to climb near enough the statue to photograph or otherwise record in some way the statue's movement or lack of it. We had to make do as best we could with what our senses told us from a distance.

What made matters more difficult was that the dimness of the lower half of Mary's body and of the nearby rocks made it hard to judge clearly the 'movement' against the statue's fixed surrounds. Could it be that the explanation derived from this contrast between the brightness of Mary's face and the dimness of its backdrop?

Observing other people staring at the statue I noticed two things. One was that almost everyone was concentrating as hard as

possible, trying to keep absolutely still. The second thing was that, even so, nobody managed to keep his or her head absolutely still: everyone's head moved — slightly but constantly. Presumably mine did too. Was this part of the explanation?

To check I exaggerated the head movements I had observed in others: I shook my head just an inch or so from side to side, but very fast. Heaven knows what effect this had on other people nearby. I know what effect it had on me: Mary's head and shoulders appeared to dance furiously. I tried the same thing out staring at a lamp that had been fixed to a telegraph pole, shining out towards the congregation so that they could see where they were going. When my head shook, the lamp also appeared to vibrate against the pole.

I left Ballinspittle certain that the explanation for the statue's 'movement' lay in the optical effects of the way Mary's head was lit. The next morning the *Cork Examiner* confirmed my impressions. It carried a report about a team of psychologists from Cork's University College. They had studied the 'miracle' and confirmed that people standing at night some distance from a brightly-lit object which is set against dim surrounds will appear to see movement: our eyes work best in daylight, and are susceptible to being deceived at night.

Not that the Cork team's findings cut any ice with the faithful. Rumours spread that they had been put up to it by the Bishop of Cork in order to bring his flock back into line. The rumours were denied. And each night, thousands continued to descend on Ballinspittle to watch and to pray. By last week at least 100,000 people had visited the grotto — a sizeable proportion of the population of County Cork and towns and villages in neighbouring counties. As far as I could judge, many of them continued to believe that they had witnessed a miracle.

It would be easy to dismiss all this from the safe distance of urban, secular Britain as just a quixotic, rural Catholic phenomenon: how odd, how sad, how *silly*. In fact what has been happening at Ballinspittle is very impressive: thousands of people enduring often uncomfortable weather, praying together without any extravagant emotion, leaving hardly any litter. The village provides a far more heartwarming spectacle of people gathering in large numbers than, say, the average English football crowd, or a march through Derry. Except that it is based on an illusion, and surely that renders the whole nightly ritual ultimately meaningless, even dangerous.

Or does it? These are deep waters. Back to politics next week. □



Camera Press

THE COST OF YOUR CARRIES

The public has always suspected that doctors and lawyers use their monopoly on knowledge to their own advantage rather than that of the consumer. The latest target is the dental profession — its high earnings are under scrutiny, amid suspicion that dentists carry out work that isn't strictly necessary. This week's proposal that they be allowed to advertise clearly points to their future as a private service. It is this future, actively promoted by the government, that is the most serious threat to the nation's teeth. JOAN SMITH reports

IN JANUARY this year, I underwent treatment for a pre-cancer of the cervix. The smears which preceded it, the operation itself (which involved the most up-to-date laser equipment), and the checks which followed it, cost me nothing. Last month, I visited the dentist. Having my teeth cleaned, a few fillings, and one crown, cost £115. Both courses of

treatment were carried out within the NHS.

The reason for this paradox — my cervix is entitled to free treatment while my teeth cost a small fortune — is that the NHS is rapidly approaching the point where Nye Bevan's prophecy in 1951 is coming true. In his resignation speech to the House of Commons, prompted by the issue of the introduction of

charges in the NHS, he warned that what was being proposed was only a start. 'The Health Service will be like Lavinia — all the limbs cut off and eventually her tongue cut out too', he predicted. Appropriately, the charges that were being introduced in 1951 were for false teeth and glasses, both of them provided by sections of the NHS which have proved prime targets for the Thatcher administration.

At that time, only three years after the NHS was set up, this inroad into the principle of free health care was a resigning matter. Harold Wilson went as well as Bevan. Yet when Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, announced changes not only in charges but the way in which patients contribute to their treatment in March this year, the significance of the event went largely unnoticed. That is because the decision of Attlee's cabinet in 1951 paved the way for further erosions of the principle of free treatment for all, with eyes, teeth, and

prescriptions the favourite targets.

But what the government has done to the dental service this year is qualitatively different from previous increases in charges. The leader writer of *British Dental Journal*, organ of the dentists' professional body, the British Dental Association, was one of the honourable few who spotted what was going on. And that is, in the *BDJ*'s words, 'the effective privatisation of the service for all except children, expectant mothers and those on low incomes.'

The key to how the system has changed does not lie in the increased charges for individual items like crowns or bridges. They rose by, on the whole, a bit more than the rate of inflation — by between six and ten per cent. The government also pointed out, with an air of self-congratulation, that 'the maximum charge for any single course of treatment will increase by just 4½ per cent'.

These predictable increases mask the real change. Before 1 April, you could visit the dentist and undergo a routine course of treatment, including scaling and several fillings, for a flat £14.50. You would pay more only if you needed more complicated work like crowns, bridges or dentures. Now the cost of your routine treatment is £17 plus 40 per cent of any extra.

According to the *BDJ*, the present trend of people opting to have their teeth pulled out, which is cheap, rather than crowns and bridges fitted, will now be extended to routine work like fillings. One dentist I spoke to, who practises in Hackney, an area of east London regarded as the poorest borough in England, says some of his patients, who do not fall into the government's narrowly defined categories of people exempt from payment, are simply getting out of the chair and going home because they cannot afford treatment. For another peculiarity of the new system is that the dentist is obliged to give an estimate in advance, and then revise it as he or she goes along if necessary. If what looked like a simple filling turns out to require more complicated treatment, the dentist has to stop, inform the patient of the increase in cost, and ask whether the patient has enough money to carry on. Of course, the patient who has had a large hole drilled in a tooth is not in a position to think it over.

BARGAINING IN the dentist's chair is a far cry from the ideals with which the NHS was set up. In 1942, the Beveridge report recognised 'a general demand' for a free dental service, and said it was 'not open to serious doubt' that such a service should be free.

Just after the NHS was set up in 1948, the Ministry of Health produced a booklet to explain the new service to the public. The purpose of the NHS, it said, was 'to make all the health services available to every man, woman and child in the population, irrespective of their age, or where they live, or how much money they have'. (My emphasis). The total cost was to be 'a charge of the national income, in the same way as the Defence Services and other national necessities.'

Increases in dental charges under the present government have brought about a situation where, by last year, paying patients were contributing half the cost of their treatment. The new system is designed to bring that figure

up towards three-quarters. It is rather as if the government were to announce we can have the army and air force free, but have to pay most of the cost of the navy.

The government's White Paper on public expenditure indicates there will be further increases in the cost of dental treatment in 1986 and 1987. It is quite possible that certain parts of the dental service will be privatised altogether, as has already happened with the opticians. According to the *BDJ*, the new charges display 'a callous disregard for dental health.' It concludes that 'the government's pledge that the National Health Service is safe in its hands ring hollow in the ears of the nation's dentists.'

The government's attack on NHS dentistry is not a response to a dramatic improvement in the nation's teeth. Current statistics on the state of dental health in this country are only encouraging by comparison to the early part of the century, when teeth really were rotten. In 1944, the Teviot Report on dentistry to the Minister of Health concluded that 'the state of

‘According to the *British Dental Journal*, the present trend of people opting to have their teeth pulled out, which is cheap, rather than crowns and bridges fitted, will now be extended to routine work like fillings.’

dental health of our population is bad, and its effect on the general health is bad.'

One Approved Society which administered limited dental care under the 1924 National Health Insurance Act reported that 12.2 per cent of the teenagers aged 16 to 19 who applied for treatment needed full upper and lower dentures. By 1970, the proportion of the population under the age of 30 with no teeth at all had dropped from 11.1 to 4.6 per cent. But in 1978, an adult dental health survey recorded that more than 39 per cent of adults in Scotland lacked all their teeth.

Nor is it just a problem of the statistics being distorted by elderly people who lost their teeth before the introduction of the NHS. In June this year, the *BDJ* published an article which pointed out that 'dental ill health is still a major health problem' among adolescents in Glasgow. And in 1971, various surveys showed that only one out of every three two-year-olds was free from dental caries. By the time the children were old enough to go to school, 90 per cent of them had the disease.

If anything, there are urgent reasons why the government should be encouraging more people to go to the dentist, not hiking up the charges. The Department of Health maintains that increased charges have only a temporary effect in keeping people away. Against that is the fact that this year's change in the system of charges means a much more drastic increase in the cost of treatment to the patient than in previous years. It also flies in the face of the recommendations of the Dental Strategy Review Group, which was set up by the government and reported in 1981. 'There can

be no doubt that any charge to patients will deter some from seeking the treatment that they need', it reported. 'The level of charges should therefore be kept as low as possible.'

AS PUBLIC disquiet grows, the government has come up with a convenient explanation of the lack of a good, comprehensive dental service: the shortcomings of the dentists themselves. They are an easy target. An official government inquiry is going on into the possible abuse of dentists' payments; a parliamentary question in July elicited the fact that more than 280 dentists earned in excess of £100,000 last year. The highest paid NHS dentist received £241,590. These figures represent gross earnings, of course, and include the cost of running the practice.

But a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, Sir Gordon Downey, published last year, revealed that the 'monitoring of high-earning dentists is hampered by the difficulty of identifying dentists practising in associateships. A substantial fraud involving false claims in the names of former associates was perpetrated by a dentist a few years ago'.

Few cases of fraud are reported to the police or Director of Public Prosecutions: two out of 3,424 of the cases examined by a special investigation unit in 1982. That year, an Australian dentist working in the NHS, Hugh Hourigan, was jailed for 18 months for a spectacular fraud. Hourigan submitted more than 8,000 bogus claims for payment and cost the taxpayer £300,000.

But the allegation that most worries patients is that dentists carry out unnecessary treatment. The piece-work system of payment, which means that the dentist gets paid more if he or she does a lot to your teeth, is an encouragement to do as much work as possible. Sir Gordon Downey recognised this fact; his report said that present arrangements 'provide little incentive for dentists to concentrate more on prevention rather than treatment of disease, in accordance with current dental strategy' and place the emphasis on 'quantity rather than quality'.

It is certainly the case that the NHS has not managed to achieve a uniform standard of health care for teeth across the country. The results of a study published in 1981 showed that you are nearly four times as likely to have your teeth pulled out if you live in the north of England. The average male dentist in the Northern Region of the survey extracted 1,000 teeth per year, while his counterpart in the south took out only 270. Nor are the variations in treatment a function only of where you live. Female dentists pull out fewer teeth — two for every five extracted by a man.

GIVEN THAT most people can tell horror stories about dental treatment, surprisingly few go to the trouble of complaining about it. Only two per cent of cases examined by the Dental Reference Service — the body responsible for monitoring the quality of dental treatment — arise from patients' complaints. The rest of the DRS's work consists of random checks of treatment carried out by dentists, and inquiries where claim forms submitted by dentists suggest unnecessary or unsatisfactory work has been done.

The problem with the DRS is not so much

that it is toothless — it has the power to withhold substantial sums from dentists who have carried out bad work — but that it is chronically understaffed. In 1979, when it was able to examine an average of two patients per dentist per year, a Royal Commission recommended increases in staff to bring the figure up to four or five per dentist. The government has responded by cutting staff, so that by 1982, when NHS dentists were carrying out around 31.5 million pieces of treatment per year, the DRS was able to see only a paltry 1.7 patients per dentist. Even so, what it found was not encouraging. The Comptroller and Auditor General's report on NHS dentistry last year extrapolated the DRS's findings and suggested that treatment costing £17m per year was 'mainly unsatisfactory', and treatment costing £170m 'partly unsatisfactory'.

The terms of reference of the committee of inquiry set up to look at the way dentists are paid is also examining 'the extent of unnecessary dental treatment in the general dental service.' The committee has not yet reported; so far, all the government has done about it is suggest that the new charging system will discourage the practice. The idea is that the increased cost to the patient will make her or him query whether what is being proposed by the dentist is really essential. Unfortunately, unless the government intends to offer the public brief courses in dentistry, few of us are in a position to act as dental police. □

EDUCATION



Fictional interpretation (from Channel Four's *Birth of a Nation*) of what happens when teachers lose control. But what is it that makes children impossible to teach?

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ 'It was always expected that I'd work. If I stayed at home all day I'd just get in the way of the nanny and the cleaning ladies.' — Quote from Lady Jane Spencer Churchill in *Options* (Kaktus Leach)

□ Recently she was annoyed when she heard Charles and Diana had invited his former bodyguard, Superintendent John Maclean, for lunch. She believes strongly that although one may treat one's staff well and with kindness this does not extend to inviting them to lunch. — *Woman* (Mrs. C. L. Smith)

□ 'I don't think you can say I've sold out because I've had my picture taken with Neil Kinnock. I've had my picture taken with Derek Hatton as well.' — Billy Bragg in *Socialist Worker* (Brian Smith)

CHANGES TO NS LISTINGS

Starting with our issue dated 13 September, Listings in its present form will be abolished and a new Listings service, called **AGENDA**, will take its place.

For a free leaflet giving full details of how the New Statesman's AGENDA column can help organisers of groups and meetings with their publicity please contact David Jones on 01-251 5487 or write to AGENDA, New Statesman, FREEPOST, London EC1B 1EB.

NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT THESE SCHOOLS

'Difficult' children may do better in ordinary schools, research shows. BARRY HUGILL reports on the moves away from segregation

STRANGE HOW educational fashions change. Take last month's report on special education in ILEA produced by former schools inspector John Fish. The 300 page document is emphatic that a comprehensive school system that excludes children because they have physical disabilities, are slow learners, or just a pain in the classroom, isn't comprehensive at all. And so say all of us.

Yet only six years ago ILEA in its evidence to the Warnock Committee, then investigating special education, claimed that its special schools represented 'a highly developed technique of positive discrimination'. A survey conducted for the Advisory Centre for Education in 1980 showed that ILEA was certainly showing the rest of the country how to deal with West Indian children 'with emotional problems' by the creation of special off-site units where they could be taught free of interference from the rest of the school population.

Why the dramatic change? Well, political pressure certainly played a part. For years black parents' groups have asked why their children tended to find their way into special schools and their agitation is beginning to pay off. Probably

of greater importance is the growing body of evidence that isolating children from their peers often does as much harm as good.

THE CASE FOR segregation is a fairly straightforward one. How can you expect a child with a severe physical disability to cope with the stresses and strains of an ordinary school, ask the supporters of special schools? They usually add that it is unfair on the majority of pupils to have their lessons disrupted by troublesome children who obviously have behavioural problems and point out that the staff of special schools are trained to deal with the particular problems of their charges.

The last point is an easy one to answer because it is not true. Most teachers in special schools have had no special training. They gain experience of teaching 'difficult' children because they have to. The children present no single category of difficulty. Of the 120,000 children currently in special schools, well over half are defined as having moderate learning difficulties (what used to be called educational subnormality or ESN) or are 'maladjusted', a catch-all term meaning hard to teach.

With children who have medical problems there is no absolute measure of handicap. The degree of handicap, says John Fish, the author of the ILEA report, is often determined by the attitude of others. So if a teacher is embarrassed by the presence of a child suffering from Downs Syndrome or feels unable to cope with a spastic child then that pupil is handicapped. Even more obviously if a school is so designed that a

wheelchair cannot be easily manoeuvred around it, the child's degree of handicap is increased.

Eloquent testimony to the value of integration is made by headteacher Richard Jones, educational adviser to the Downs Children's Association. He has a daughter who suffers from the handicap but who is successfully integrated in an ordinary primary school: 'Parents have been abused, humiliated and insulted in their struggle to get integration, and in one case an LEA was prepared to see a four year old boy travel 20 miles over hilly, country terrain to go to a special school rather than attend the village school on his doorstep. Another LEA would accept a Downs child if the parents forked out from their own pocket the cost of paying for the necessary extra help in class.'

Sadly such cases are all too common. Although a majority of educationalists today accept the principle of integration as do Labour and Liberal, and a growing number of Conservative, politicians, little is done to turn principle into practice. While the 1981 Education Act theoretically gives parents the right to demand that their children be educated in mainstream schools, it has enough small print to enable LEAs to avoid meeting this obligation.

For years, LEAs have specialised in excluding children and for many it has become a way of life. Lorna Selfe, the area educational

psychologist for Hereford and Worcester, says that the reasons given by the psychologists for referring children to special schools are often related as much to the needs of other groups as to the needs of the individual child. The school couldn't cope, for example, or the parents' marriage had broken down and the child might have to go into care. 'Can we convincingly state that a boy with behavioural difficulties needs a single sex residential setting with 50 other boys with similar problems,' she asks?

Alas for the troubled psychologists, research evidence suggests special schools can do more harm than good. For instance, at least two thirds of pupils categorised as maladjusted spontaneously improve in mainstream schools. Of course, it may be that the children in special schools are significantly more difficult than the others. Without more authoritative research the effect of the changing trends in policy on 'maladjusted' children cannot be properly gauged.

However, rather than seeing an increase in 'maladjusted' children we may be witnessing a general increase in children of resistance to job-orientated education coupled with an increased identification of the 'maladjusted' simply because the psychological services exist. Yet the criteria used by psychologists are highly questionable, as the files of ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) illustrate.

At the moment ACE is handling the case of a young black girl referred to a special unit

because of 'behavioural and emotional difficulties'. She was asked by the psychologist what her ambition was and replied that she wanted to be an astronaut. This, he concluded, was evidence of a girl suffering 'from delusions of grandeur with an incomplete grasp of reality'. Yet her own teacher thought her no more difficult than many others. So teachers beware: never encourage your pupils to indulge their imagination or aspire to careers outside their orbit.

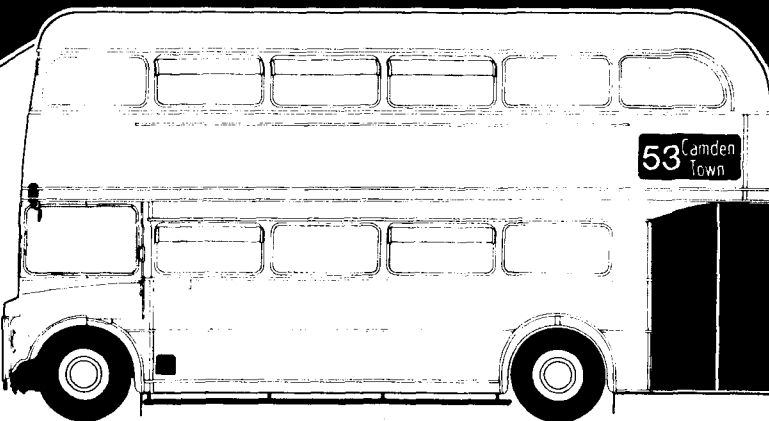
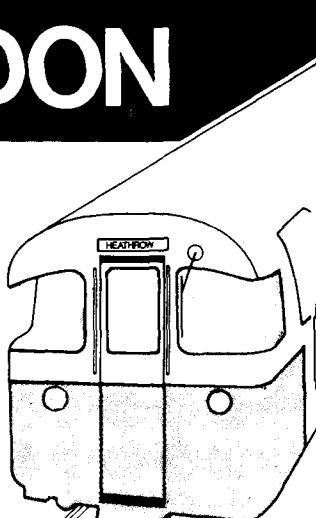
INTEGRATION HAS put teachers' unions in something of a quandary. A spokesperson from the NUT told me that the union accepted the principle of integration but that ILEA would have to consult fully with it before closing any of its special schools — in which much effort and resources have been invested. Identical sentiments were expressed by Peter Smith, deputy general secretary of the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association (AMMA). All the unions insist that adequate resources must be made available before mainstream schools are asked to cater for children previously segregated and are not prepared to see any teachers in redundant special schools out of work. To which Peter Newell of the Children's Legal Centre retorts: 'Why should young people with disabilities and significant difficulties have to wait their place in mainstream education on grounds of resources?' ▷

TRANSPORT POLICIES FOR LONDON

Have your say

The GLC believes transport affects all of us in London. But transport planning has often failed to meet the needs of the vast majority of people. It has tended, for example, to concentrate on cars and roadbuilding at the expense of public transport — despite the fact that only 25% of Londoners have direct access to cars. It has paid too little attention to the needs of women and ethnic minority communities. With a limited amount of cash, choices have to be made. Do we build more roads? Do we have a better, cheaper public transport system? How do we make transport more accessible to people with disabilities? Or, even, should we be working towards a 'free fares' policy? We also have to look at how transport affects the Capital's environment.

Lorries are a good example. Do we allow them to use our roads without restriction? And what about the problems posed by the M25 and other major



roads in and around London? What about the severance of communities, the good and bad environmental effects, the impact they have on other modes of travel?

These and other issues are dealt with by the draft TPP — the GLC's Transport Policies and Programme. It looks into the medium and long term futures and suggests alternative policies.

It's important that you have your say in the making of these policies. The draft TPP is explained in a very full report, so we've also produced a brief summary. You can get either by writing to:

Greater London Council (TD/PM/PC), County Hall, London SE1 7PB or by phoning 01-633 8447.

GLC

Working for London

He has a point. If education is a universal right, why should any one group have to wait before they can have access to it? But it is difficult not to have some sympathy for the unions. ILEA, for example, is suffering, as are most other LEAs, from falling rolls. It should have been the great opportunity to cut class sizes (itself a partial remedy to the problem of 'difficult' children). But reality is rate-capping, district auditors, and unemployed teachers.

Teachers are also worried about the disruption that maladjusted children undoubtedly cause in schools. But even if they accept that bad behaviour is often a response to poor, unimaginative teaching or problems emanating from home, doing something about it is difficult. Thus the demand for more resources and increased training.

There are some hopeful signs. In Sheffield the educational psychology service no longer

refers children to special schools but works with teachers to devise classroom strategies to help difficult pupils. And in Liverpool, if the district auditor hasn't taken over by September, a radical reorganisation will create neighbourhood community schools open seven days a week from early in the morning till late at night, 52 weeks a year, offering educational opportunities to everyone in the area. If it works, this will give a new meaning to the word 'integration'.

But there are plenty of bad signs. Professor Sally Tomlinson of Lancaster University believes: 'We are in the business of stigmatising the poor, the unemployed, the ethnic minorities by giving them a "special education". Can it really be a coincidence that the growth in the number of children said to have special needs has occurred at the same time as unemployment has soared?' □

an international symbolism (on the bus to Newbury, I met a woman from South Carolina making a pilgrimage to the 'myth' which had drawn her into the peace movement), it has been severely criticised for a lack of awareness about what is happening outside — to people in the Third World or to black people in Britain for instance. It's a failing shared with CND. While this hasn't magically changed (a Greenham record features a track which goes 'We're singing to save Europe'), developments are taking place.

Earlier this year, Greenham women Zohl and Bridget organised a tour of Pacific women campaigners, paid for by women's donations. Their impact has been remarkable and money is now being raised to pay for two others to attend the London Dumping Convention in early September, when the governments of Britain, Japan and the USA are expected to railroad others into removing the temporary ban on dumping at sea. The Pacific women's testimonies to the poisoning of their ocean and their people will be supported by a 'mass, creative' Greenham presence outside.

Similarly other Greenham women go out on international solidarity delegations — to Nicaragua, for instance. Lambeth Women for Peace divide their time between supporting Greenham and women in Tigray.

FOR THOSE STILL living at the camp, life is now tougher than it's ever been. First there were tents; there was the will and the material to make life in the mud as pleasant as it could be. Then the bailiffs took the tents away and there was no money for new ones. So women built 'benders' from bent trees and polythene. But now the bailiffs come sometimes five times a week, even twice a day, especially to the perimeter camps near the road. Although by law the bailiffs are only allowed to dismantle structures and remove 'rubbish', they take everything. Lynette, a regular at Orange gate who lives in Newbury, said:

The most disturbing thing is not the increased frequency, it's the increased brutality of the bailiffs. They take all our property, food and all, and put it into a muncher. They push us around, too. The police are supposedly there to ensure the bailiffs keep the law. Instead, they protect the bailiffs' behaviour.

That behaviour has included Rebecca Johnson's hand being damaged by the 'muncher'. Time and time again, efforts by women to get back their belongings or to file complaints at the police station have been blocked. Now they are hoping to bring a collective court case. As Janey Hulme tried to take photos of an eviction, bailiffs squirted her camera with a fire extinguisher; she's also hoping to take the case to court.

Meanwhile, the women live in grim conditions, sleeping under hurriedly-erected plastic shelters or just in survival bags. Anything they hope to hang on to they must be able to roll quickly into a bundle and throw into someone's car before the bailiffs seize it.

Living like this means hanging on with a terrible tenacity. It's one thing to put up with a wet sleeping bag for a couple of nights when you can look forward to a hot bath when you return. It's another to keep remaking the choice to live there in the cold and the wet and the dirt, waking up every morning to the chilling

PEACE MOVEMENT



'Every so often the water gets too heavy for the makeshift plastic shelter and comes whooshing down one side, splashing the women nearest. . .'

GREENHAM WOMEN CLING ON FOR DEAR LIFE

Life is tougher than ever for the Greenham Common protestors. But the role of the peace camp is changing, as it moves away from a narrow preoccupation with cruise missiles. JANE DIBBLIN reports

IT'S THREE IN THE afternoon and I'm trying to dry myself for the fourth time today beside a reluctant, smoking fire at Greenham Green Gate. It's been raining since daybreak. Every so often the water gets too heavy for the makeshift plastic shelter and comes whooshing down one side, splashing the women nearest.

This summer's weather has afforded no let-up in the discomfort of living perched on the side of the base. No sun to relax in and gather energy for the winter to come. In three and a half years the daily grind of survival — very different from the adrenalin-high mass actions — has taken its toll.

Mass actions are no longer a primary focus. 'Carry Greenham Home', said the film, sang

the women — and that's what has happened. The idea is for women to come to Greenham for a while to gather strength and ideas and then to take that back to their own towns and villages. Their experiences have led many women to become involved with related work — on women in prison, or on policing, for example. Some have dropped the word 'peace' from the name, calling it a 'resistance camp', in recognition of this. These changes were particularly marked during the miners' strike, when many Greenham groups around the country put their resources into supporting Women Against Pit Closures.

What this shift marks is Greenham turning outward. Although Greenham has always had

technology of the base. One young woman in black punk clothes boarding the bus back to London told me 'I lived here for a year, and again for six months but now I can only take it for a couple of days, it tires me out so much.' Many women have also reported mysterious illnesses which they are investigating.

The mass upsurge of energy when Greenham women hoped they could stop cruise missiles being placed in Britain has gone, replaced by the determination and sense of humour needed for a long struggle. The cat-and-mouse battle with 'the system' goes on. Newbury magistrates are said to have a six-week backlog of Greenham cases. Two weeks ago, five women who were each sentenced to seven days in prison were told the prisons were full (though not all with Greenham women, naturally). Newbury police station was declared a temporary women's jail. They were held in 7 foot square cells for 23 hours with just a mattress and a blanket; the light was left on all day and all night. They were only let out for a couple of minutes each day to wash.

ONE OF THE MAIN concerns of the women at the camp is to break the new Ministry of Defence trespass bye-law brought in in March under the 1892 Military Lands Acts, thus circumventing discussion in Parliament and closing off another avenue of legitimate, peaceful protest. Over 400 women broke into the base in April and were arrested. Their sheer numbers have prompted magistrates to sentence many women to one day only — meaning they can normally go free as they have already spent a day in police custody. As usual, though, they seem to be trying to identify 'ring leaders' and one old-timer, Catrina Howe, was sent down last week for three months for a total of six trespasses.

If for the fluctuating, anarchic hotchpotch that is Greenham, the battle is tiring, it is an institutionalised monument for those outside. On 'Phoenix' weekends, the first weekend in every month, visitors flock in to renew the camp's energy. It does, but it is also disruptive for those living there. Visitors keep coming from overseas too — three women are due to arrive from Nova Scotia, Canada, with 250 yards of banner for a Replace the Base celebration in September.

But the weariness is beginning to worry some women who've been keeping it going. Zohl said: 'I've been there on and off for two years and energy is at its lowest ebb over. Perhaps what we need to ask is — do we still need Greenham? Is Greenham dying? I've left to do Pacific work and I think there are thousands like me who want it to continue but don't feel they can commit themselves to living there. It's not clear there are enough others to take their place.' But Lynette, who is a Cruisewatch member thinks the weariness is at a turning point. 'I sense a rejuvenation; camps have opened at gates where they had previously disappeared. Each camp has its own personality and that allows different women to find somewhere they fit into. We are learning to cope with evictions, too.'

What seems crucial is that the women successfully challenge the bailiffs' actions in court, which will allow them more space and a slightly more stable life. And as always, new women are needed. □

BRITISH BROADCASTING

HANDS UP FOR NEW GOVERNORS

Appointed by the Queen in Council, aka Prime Ministerial patronage, the governors of the BBC now enjoy little public confidence. Only elections will restore their independent role argues JAMES CURRAN

THROUGHOUT THE last 15 years, there has been some resistance within broadcasting organisations to the official definition of the Ulster crisis as being essentially a law and order problem. The BBC Board of Governors rejected in 1972 the Home Secretary's request to ban a three hour debate on *The Question of Ulster*. A number of documentaries have subjected to critical scrutiny various aspects of law enforcement in Northern Ireland from the Diplock Courts to the use of interrogation techniques, which were judged by the European Commission on Human Rights to amount to torture. Although unorthodox and unsettling insights into the root causes of the Ulster crisis have generally been absent in current affairs coverage, they have surfaced in notable TV films like *Harry's Game*.

But British TV coverage of the counter insurgency campaign in Ulster has been less independent of the official line than American TV coverage of the Vietnam War largely because British broadcasters have been subject to far greater restrictions. The basic ground rules were changed in 1971 when both the BBC and IBA formally abandoned their commitment to impartiality in covering armed conflict in the province. These have resulted in 32 well-documented instances of programmes about

BBC placepersons

Stuart Young (Chairman). Senior partner in firm of City accountants. Director of Tesco and British Caledonian. Brother of Cabinet Minister Lord Young.

Sir William Rees-Mogg (Vice-Chairman). Former editor of *The Times*. Chairman of the Arts Council. Fervent Roman Catholic. Member of Conservative Party; twice Tory parliamentary candidate (defeated). Oxbridge.

Lady Faulkner of Downpatrick (National Governor for Northern Ireland before 1 August). (Labour appointee.) Widow of Brian Faulkner, the former Ulster Unionist Prime Minister. Keen on fox hunting.

James Kincade (National Governor for Northern Ireland since 1 August). Head of Methodist College, Belfast. Like Lady Faulkner, a Protestant — thereby breaking with traditional Protestant-Catholic alternation.

Watson Peat (National Governor for Scotland). Farmer and prominent agricultural Establishment figure. Former director of FMC, the meat processing and wholesaling firm. JP.

Alwyn Roberts (National Governor for Wales). Director of extra-mural studies, University College of North Wales. Only *Real Lives* dissenter. Oxbridge.

Sir John Johnston (Labour appointee). Former diplomat. Oxbridge.

Jocelyn Barrow. Sole black woman on board. Former vice-chair of Campaign against Racial Discrimination.

Malcolm McAlpine. Director of Robert McAlpine Construction firm. Second cousin of Lord McAlpine of West Green, honorary treasurer of the Conservative Party.

Lord Harewood. Cousin of the Queen. President, British Board of Film Censors. Old Etonian. Colditz escapee. Oxbridge.

Lady Parkes. Educationist, former teacher at Homerton College, Cambridge. JP, member of Press Council.

Daphne Park. Principal of Somerville College, Oxford. Former diplomat and — according to Jonathan Bloch's recent book on British intelligence — an ex-M16 employee. Oxbridge.

Sir John Boyd. Former general secretary of engineering union, AUEW and Labour Party chair. Prominent right-wing trade unionist. Salvation Army stalwart.

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Ulster being banned or cut for political reasons by the broadcasting authorities or senior management since 1970.

Nonetheless, this did not satisfy the sharper political demands of this government which have intensified pressure on the BBC in particular, to treat broadcasting as sharing exactly the same interests as those of government. The most alarming feature of this campaign is the way in which the BBC Board of Governors has been politicised. During the pre-Thatcherite consensus, appointments were mostly made in the spirit of bi-partnership. Successive Labour administrations chose Lord Hill, a former Conservative minister, to be Chairman of the BBC (1967-73) and Mark Bonham Carter, a leading Liberal, to be Vice-Chairman (1975-81). Viscount Whitelaw's appointment in 1981 of Lord Thomson, a former Labour politician, as Chairman of the IBA (a Home Office appointment unlike appointments to the BBC Board of Governors which are made by the Queen in Council on the Prime Minister's recommendation) belongs to this tradition.

BUT NOMINATIONS to the BBC Board of Governors have increasingly gone during Mrs Thatcher's premiership to known supporters of the government party. The BBC Chairmanship has been awarded to a committed Conservative who is also the brother of a government minister; the Vice-Chairmanship to a distinguished, maverick Tory who has stood as a Conservative parliamentary candidate.

This political packing of the BBC has an echo in commercial television. Government appointees and their staff have been increasingly restrictive in their policing of coverage of Northern Ireland. In the last five years, Thames TV, Granada, London Weekend Television, Diverse Reports and Channel Four (*The Cause of Ireland*) have all been told to make cuts in programmes about Northern Ireland that have been passed through their internal vetting procedures.

The controversy now surrounding the actions of the BBC Board of Governors and the IBA underlines the need to find a better method of recruitment to broadcasting authorities than ministerial patronage. Of all the available alternatives, probably the best is for members of broadcasting authorities to be elected by an electoral college consisting of representatives from the major political parties, principal interest groups (such as the CBI and TUC), leading associations (like the Women's Institute and Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), workers in the BBC and ITV, and perhaps nominees elected by a write-in postal ballot of readers of the *TV Times* and *Radio Times*.

The introduction of an electoral college will not necessarily result in a more liberal style of trusteeship. It may well not throw up people as able as those who now dominate the BBC board of governors and IBA. But it will produce broadcasting authorities which are more independent of government and will enjoy more confidence from their staff and the public. After the last fortnight, who can doubt that this would be an improvement? □

James Curran is Head of the Department of Communications at Goldsmiths' College, University of London.



This is not about Ireland

Mandy Merck

IN JULY 1979, the BBC's *Tonight* programme screened an interview with a member of the Irish National Liberation Army, who argued that the INLA had 'executed' rather than 'murdered' Airey Neave. In the studio discussion afterwards, Gerry Fitt, then SDLP MP for Belfast West, commented: 'I don't think it was wise of the BBC to allow such an interview to take place. I know that in Northern Ireland (it) will have inflamed Protestant and Loyalist opinion.'

In October 1981, John Tusa interviewed Sinn Fein spokesman Danny Morrison on BBC2's *Newsnight* after the death of hunger-striking prisoner and elected MP Bobby Sands. Morrison argued: 'All the journalists that I have spoken to around the world are sympathetic and understand the situation... They've seen it before in Latin American countries and they realise that Bobby Sands was a political prisoner.' 'So you feel that you are getting the propaganda victory from all this?' Tusa asked. 'You're getting propaganda mileage out of it?'

As Philip Schlesinger, Graham Murdock and the late Philip Elliott demonstrated in their analysis of these interviews*, the raw material of the *Real Lives* affair has been around for years. Violent extremists, violent extremists elected to office, the oxygen of publicity, the call to turn it off... even John Tusa was back on stage after the screening of the banned BBC programme at the ICA last week, and if not Lord Fitt, then his son-in-law, *Newsnight* reporter Vincent Hanna.

The crowded roomful of these broadcasters resembled a mass audition for *Acceptable Levels*, the recent Channel 4 movie which followed a fictive TV documentary crew through their expense account compromises in Belfast. Those present thought *At the Edge of the Union* was a fine film, although not an exceptional one for the BBC. No one asked why it hardly mentioned Loyalist paramilitaries, or how you can 'balance' the asymmetry of Protestant dominance and Catholic subordination. And as Schlesinger and his co-authors could have predicted, the political content of Martin McGuinness's arguments were first ignored — and then simply condemned. Speaker after speaker congratulated the *Real Lives* team for demonstrating how truly awful the IRA was. 'It certainly made me more hostile to and more fearful of IRA terrorism,' observed Shadow Home Secretary Gerald Kaufman in defence of the programme. (No one seemed to have any fear of Unionists afterwards — perhaps because a scene in which a group of Unionists sit at table hoping for some crumbs of wisdom from Ian Paisley while the great man doggedly munches cake was so comical, perhaps because Loyalist Gregory Campbell was only shown carrying his weapon in self-

defence. As for State terror, that was consigned to some ancient black and white footage from the mythical year of 1968.)

Before the screening began, BBC reporter Hanna, who also sits on the NUJ Executive, declared that all responsible journalists abhorred terrorism. 'The job of the journalist is to oppose and expose it.' When I asked how that situated him vis-a-vis groups like the African National Congress, proscribed as 'terrorists' by the Pretoria government, he suggested that the question would be better discussed later in the day. No one did so, although a passing journalist noted afterwards that this stance could prove interesting when ANC President Oliver Tambo arrives in Britain this autumn.

Even BBC journalists know how last year's terrorist can become this year's guerilla and next year's statesman or — in the alleged case of Northern Ireland Assemblyman Martin McGuinness — do the hat trick all at once. But last week they seemed to be asking for relief from these ghastly complexities. Certainly those present at the *Real Lives* screening applauded the observation of Ulster Unionist Party Secretary Frank Millar, who argued that the government was cynically attempting to place the burden of censorship on the BBC — when what it should have done was ban Sinn Fein.

As long as that organisation is legal and commands electoral support, several reporters observed, they had both the right and the responsibility to publish its views. But suppose Sinn Fein was proscribed, as the *Sunday Times* seems to be seeking. *At the Edge of the Union* was being filmed when that newspaper 'revealed' that Martin McGuinness was IRA chief of staff just before Sinn Fein contested the Northern Ireland elections. It was banned just after *Sunday Times* reporter Mark Hosenball posed Mrs Thatcher that supposedly hypothetical question in Washington DC. (Another *Real Lives* champion at the ICA was the man who in 1977 deported that same journalist as a danger to British security — former Labour Home Secretary Merlyn Rees.)

No one at last week's screening seemed in the least worried that the government might take the hint so broadly offered. It was the broadcasters' freedom they sought, not those of the political movements they reported. 'This isn't about Ireland, this is about censorship' was the watchword of the day. Or as Vincent Hanna replied when the *Guardian* asked him if his Belfast background had led him to campaign for the one-day journalists' strike at the Beeb. 'Totally a coincidence. In fact Northern Ireland has been a slight hindrance...' □

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DIARY

Alison Hennegan

15 August, Cambridge

Exactly 100 years ago yesterday, the Royal Assent was given to a basically good Bill. It sought to raise the age of female consent from 12 to 16, in an attempt to check child prostitution and discourage parents and procurers from selling their often unwilling, not to say terrified, pre-pubertal charges to the highest — or sometimes merely the nearest — bidder. Now, it's true that I basically dislike the state's interference in its citizens' (consensual) sexual lives. Nevertheless in an age when the best cure for a syphilitic male was believed to be the deflowering of a female virgin, and it wasn't actually unambiguously criminal to rape a drugged 13-year-old one, better the Bill than no bill at all.

Unfortunately this particular bill had a sting in its tail, added at Committee Stage and slipped past an emotional but tired House during a late night sitting. The addition was not concerned with prostitution nor with rape. Its aim was to create a whole new class of crimes: all forms of sexual contact between men. Its effect, successfully achieved with the granting of the Royal Assent, was to create a whole new class of criminals: men who desired and acted upon their desire for other men.

Eighty-two years later, after a dreary procession of blackmail, trials, careers disrupted, lives broken and lives taken, the 1967 Sexual Offences Act brought the partial decriminalization of homosexual men. Partial, only. For today's young sexually active gay man — who can vote at 18 and be Best Man to his 16-year-old brother — still remains technically criminal until his 21st birthday.

Could all those decades of fear and misery, I wonder, possibly have pleased Henry Labouchere, that cannily colourful Old Etonian radical and the amendment's main mover? Not, on the face of it, a small-minded man, nor one unduly respectful of convention: £6000 of enjoyably accumulated undergraduate debt, followed by travels in Mexico, a love affair there with an equestrienne whose circus troupe he joined and an invigorating six-month sojourn with the Chippeway Indians. *Truth*, which he founded and edited, punctured reputations and exposed frauds with gleeful — and very expensive — insouciance. Libel suits were endless, costs heavy, damages high: often far too high to pay, so he didn't. Passionate for Irish Home Rule, braving fierce hostility in his efforts to secure peace during the Boer War — no, I really can't believe he would have rejoiced.

Even in 1885 there were those who were downright furious: or shaken, disturbed, uneasy — including, it occurs to me, quite a few of the year's best-sellers. Take Sir Richard Burton, for example, whose promising army

career was permanently checked in 1861 because the Secretariat at Bombay took exception to his confidential report on homosexuality in Indian life. 1885 was the year he published (privately) his complete translation of *The Arabian Nights*, with all the previously expurgated homosexual material restored and his own detailed and knowledgeable 'Terminal Essay' on paederasty thrown in for good measure. (Two years later an edition revised 'for household reading' appeared: the essay, needless to say, did not.) In *Marius the Epicurean* Walter Pater, stylistically fearless, timidly loving, celebrated ardent male friendships. Gordon, the hero of Khartoum, died that year but left his (edited) *Journals* Tennyson offered *Tiresias*: a healing 35 years had passed since a reviewer in *The Times* had more than hinted at the 'unnatural' emotions which suffused *In Memoriam*, Tennyson's passionate lament for Arthur Hallam. Swinburne played safe with *Marino Falieri*, a tragedy based on a 14th century Doge, but he might already have been planning his contributions to 1888's *The Whippingham Papers* which sing of arms (muscular and male) and the men (Arthur and Reginald) and the pleasurable pains which await them.

And, while I'm at it, I see that Henrietta Stannard ('John Strange Winter') published *Bootles' Baby* that year: but of her views on Labouchere's amendment I know, sadly, nothing.

Though bitterness compels me to say that I doubt whether the views of Miss Stannard

ROGER WODDIS Woman to woman

'If I ever bump into her round here, I'll give her an earful.' — Vi Mullender, a council estate tenant living near the new £400,000 Thatcher home in Dulwich

'Maggie,' I'd say, 'just look at this place, The cracks in the floor are a bloody disgrace, The ceiling's collapsing, there's damp in the walls, And I hide in the kitchen if anyone calls. The lifts are broken, there's rot in the stairs, And you never get no one to do the repairs.'

She'd probably say, 'Don't be difficult, Vi.' (I can just see the violent look in her eye.)

'You may have complaints, but I'm sure you'll agree

The cutbacks aren't meant to touch Denis and me.'

One law for the rich, and one law for the poor—

I'd give her an earful and show her the door.

The bosses we get are the ones we deserve, But I must say Her Ladyship's got a right nerve,

And though I'm no lefty or that way inclined, I'm dying to give her a piece of my mind.

It won't be a joke living next to the buyers, But Christ, I'll be dancing the day she retires.



(born 1853) were any more illiberal than those of whoever's determining editorial policy at *The Cambridge Evening News* these days. Some weeks ago, during my extremely short-lived spell as A Local Author, a friendly and intelligent features writer arrived to interview me about the childhood reminiscences I'd recently published. As a (more or less) working journalist watching a fellow journalist at work, I could see that she was beginning to shape her article around my early recognition of my homosexuality. Good, I thought, how nice not to have to have a battle about it, with me saying it matters and her saying it's irrelevant.

Not long afterwards I walked into my local newsagents and found the usually friendly proprietor eyeing me in a curiously speculative fashion. 'Don't you want the *Evening News*?', she asked, and went on asking until, thoroughly unnerved, I agreed I did. 'So you should. You're in it!', she said triumphantly, but still with a Certain Something in her eye. Oh God, I thought, I've been coming out for almost 20 years and it's still hard: but at least she knows now.

Except, of course, she doesn't, or not, at any rate, from anything the *Evening News* consented to tell her. There, under a promising and quixotically retained headline, GIRL WHO DID NOT FIT IN WINS THROUGH, is a mutilated farrago whose clumsy cuts create endless non sequiturs and nonsense. No single reference to lesbianism remains although whole paragraphs depended on it for their meaning. Gaps in the text indicate cuts, lines straggle to fill the space left by those excised. (Suggesting that at the last moment the Editor himself was responsible?) I emerge as a neurasthenic paranoiac who, rather madly and very egotistically, seems to think she's fought and won a never specified battle. No wonder the newsagent was wary.

In the days when Andrew Lumsden and I worked together on the old *Gay News* we used to fantasize about the complaints we'd make to the Press Council and the libel actions we'd bring against any paper which, by concealing our homosexuality and implying that we were heterosexual, impugned our integrity and damaged us professionally. We were joking, but only partly. And now, it seems, that time has come. I'm joking again. But only partly.

DIVIDED OPPOSITION



Indian home in Inanda — victim of economic resentment by blacks?

Last week, South Africa erupted in violence, with savage attacks on Indians by blacks and splits between Inkatha and the UDF. PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK explains that the causes of division are political, not racial

Johannesburg
SITUATED ON SOUTH Africa's sub-tropical eastern seaboard, Natal has traditionally stood aloof from the rest of the country. Often described as the last outpost of the British empire, because of its colonial-minded English-speaking whites who have retained their Britishness after generations in South Africa, the country's smallest province has always been eccentrically different from the other three.

But on 5 August the unrest and violence which has swept the country's black townships in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Cape Province for nearly a year finally exploded in Natal as well, with more than 60 people dead by the week's end, 37 shot by police.

It was a grim reminder that the political tensions and the unemployment and poverty which have served as a backdrop to the unrest in the rest of the country were as prevalent in Natal. But a new dimension was added, with ugly attacks on Indians by black people, and conflict between the United Democratic Front (UDF) and Inkatha, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's predominantly Zulu cultural and political movement.

The unrest was sparked by the apparently

politically motivated assassination of civil rights lawyer Victoria Mxenge, a defence attorney in the trial of 16 prominent UDF activists who are facing charges of treason. Infighting between Inkatha and the UDF flared into the open on 7 August when more than 3,000 people attended her memorial service in Umlazi. The meeting was disrupted by about 100 stick- and spear-wielding men, whom the UDF said were Inkatha supporters, and an all-out battle erupted between the two groups. At the end of the day at least 14 people had been killed and more than 100 injured.

By the end of the week, as the situation began to calm down, Inkatha vigilantes were patrolling the townships and were visibly in control. There was, however, widespread criticism of the vigilantes' methods of quelling the unrest, and church bodies described their methods as 'tough' and in some areas 'shocking'. UDF leaders were forced to flee the area.

HOWEVER, WHILE THE Mxenge assassination sparked the intense violence in the townships surrounding Durban, there was a general release of suppressed frustration and anger aimed primarily at the Indian population.

Poverty in the area has increased dramatically in recent years as a result of the drought which has driven people off the land in rural Kwazulu and the economic slump in which thousands of workers have been laid off.

The township of Inanda, where Zulus attacked Indian traders and drove them from their homes, has absorbed most of the refugees fleeing the drought. Indians and Zulus have lived peacefully side by side in this area for more than five decades and the evidence suggests that the attacks were economically rather than racially motivated. Most of the Indians form a petit bourgeois class of landlords and small traders.

The large Indian population in Natal is however descended from indentured labourers brought to work on the sugar cane plantations of the then British colony in the late 19th century. Politically, the community has a long history of opposition to racial segregation and apartheid. Phoenix, the Indian settlement next to Inanda which was attacked by angry mobs, was founded by Mahatma Gandhi who began his political career while practising as an attorney in South Africa. The organisation which Gandhi founded in 1907 — the Natal Indian Congress — is still highly active as an affiliate of the UDF and several of the UDF accused of treason are prominent Natal Indian leaders.

THE DIVISION between the UDF and Inkatha is not based on race — the UDF has significant support from Zulu-speaking blacks.

Rather, it is an ideological battle. The UDF — which is a national grouping of hundreds of residents' organisations, trade unions, political groups and church groups — is opposed to any participation in the apartheid system.

Inkatha has chosen to participate in the Bantustan system and runs the government of the Kwazulu homeland with Chief Buthelezi as Chief Minister. Buthelezi claims that more than a million Zulus belong to Inkatha though his support base is clearly stronger in rural Kwazulu than in the townships surrounding metropolitan Durban. Surveys by Natal University's Centre for Applied Social Science, have shown greater sentiment for the UDF among the youth while Inkatha still commands strong support from the adults.

Buthelezi, a one-time African National Congress Youth League member, remains a staunch critic of apartheid and has refused to take independence for Kwazulu. But he is still viewed by the left as a 'puppet' along with the other Bantustan leaders, none of whom command the same amount of support as

Inkatha. Tensions between the UDF and Inkatha have surfaced intermittently since the front was formed two years ago and on several occasions resulted in deaths.

The UDF has borne the brunt of government repression since the state of emergency was declared three-and-a-half weeks ago while Inkatha — despite Buthelezi's vocal criticism of the emergency — has been left untouched. Buthelezi has stumped the world by arguing against economic sanctions and UDF leaders fear that Pretoria could use him in an attempt to show the world they are prepared to talk to 'credible' black leaders.

With heightened politicisation in the black community, 'moderates' such as Buthelezi are losing ground to the burgeoning support for the UDF and the outlawed African National Congress. The fear exists, though, that the growing authoritarianism of Inkatha could be used to quell political dissidence in the Durban townships, resulting in even more violence between black people who see different ways of bringing an end to apartheid. □

We have been practising endlessly: the breaking open of doors, drilling through locks, we have been doing the craziest things. After all, when the time came we would have to be able to work very quickly. We have also tested exactly how much noise everything would make. It would not do to get into the office with much effort and then find out: 'dammit, I can't get that cupboard open!' You would look a right joker.

The action itself took five hours. The group crossed the fence at 8pm in the dark. They broke open doors with crow-bars and gathered all material from desks and cupboards into sacks. They found lists of organisations and individuals involved in anti-nuclear and anti-militarist activity. Then a truck was called by walkie-talkie. One Onkrut-member, dressed in uniform, opened the gate. The stolen documents were brought to secret hide-outs, where they are still kept.

They live in fear of infiltration by the police. In Amsterdam an Onkrut group was successfully penetrated and its members arrested. But the secrecy and caution demanded by their illegal methods is in conflict with their political aims of getting 'public understanding'. 'We have been condemned because of the violent character of our group', says Peter, 'so we need to justify our aims and methods by publication of the material. Onkrut does not regard the breaking-in as violent. We cause some damage, but not violence. We call it direct action. Many of our members still take part in non-violent demonstrations. Within Onkrut a discussion has recently developed about the breaking in. Some of us think that in this way we might end up again in a dead end street like the air-base episode'.

Onkrut is not a centrally organised group with a clear strategy. 'We form a loose association of groups, all with different aims. Our group in Utrecht has not thought over what will be next,' says Peter. But Onkrut hopes to serve the peace movement by publication of the stolen material. 'Peace campaigners should be aware of the army keeping them under surveillance. They will be regarded more and more as a danger to militarism, to the military as well as the political system, and they will be shoved in a corner by the army and secret services. As we have proven, the scenarios for such an operation are ready'.

METHODS USED by Onkrut were condemned by left-wing political parties, unions and peace groups in the past. This picture seems to have changed, as recently some left-wing members of parliament refused to condemn the burglary in Utrecht. Peter: 'Although I think that only activity outside the parliament will bring results in the long run, this might be of some use. We will probably need to use politics more often than in the past.'

The attitude of some radical members of parliament was not shared by all left and libertarian groups in the Netherlands. The soldiers' union, frequently mentioned in the stolen and published CID-documents, condemned Onkrut for its methods and anti-militaristic attitude. Onkrut has been able to reveal secrets which shock left-wingers and peace campaigners in Holland. In turn, they cling all the more firmly to their methods and values. □

ANARCHISM

DUTCH ANARCHIST GROUPS 'SPIES FOR PEACE'

For two years, radical groups of Dutch anarchists have been breaking into government bunkers and offices to obtain sensational information about NATO-wide plans for suppressing pacifist and other dissent. One of their organisers talks to BEN BRABER about their methods and aims

Amsterdam
FOUR YEARS AGO some 500 anti-war demonstrators were driven from a military display at a Dutch air-force base. The audience of 300,000 showed its approval by applauding the rough actions of the police.

The demonstrators were from the anarchist group, Onkrut. Its campaigns against militarism had become more and more violent until the show-down at the air-force base in 1981 and the display of public hostility.

From then on Onkrut tried to convince the political left-wing and the public that the army was developing plans to suppress pacifist and dissident groups in war time and moments of political disturbance. And again Onkrut managed to reach the headlines. In May 1981, April 1983 and in November 1984 Onkrut broke into government bunkers and offices.

The material they found there was published and seemed to underline their argument that the secret service and army are keeping left-wingers, pacifists and prominent peace campaigners under close surveillance. Questions were finally asked in parliament. The answers given by the Home Minister convinced neither members of parliament nor of the peace movement.

The office break-in on the night of 18 November last year was carried out by the autonomous Onkrut group in Utrecht. They carried out a small truck load of confidential and

secret papers from the rooms of the counter-intelligence service (CID). Peter was one of the organisers: 'All members of our group have different objectives' he says. 'Some of us have taken part in demonstrations against cruise missiles, in peace camps, in anti-nuclear power rallies and in squatters' actions.'

According to an article in the Dutch weekly, *De Groene Amsterdammer*, there were: 'No elaborate strategic analyses. Nothing. It was purely by chance that a few members of Onkrut discovered that the archives of the Counter-intelligence Detachment (CID) — roughly the army's BVD — were located in the Knoop Barracks in Utrecht. To be precise: in a room on the second floor. They were hardly guarded. Only, Onkrut had to be quick for the CID was going to move. It was now or never, that was clear. But: how?'

They learned their tactics from the large Dutch squatters' movement. 'We watched the office, which is situated in an old barrack, for more than three weeks. During these weeks we selected people for the action. They had to be very trustworthy and easy to work with. Furthermore they had to be willing to sacrifice themselves and not be panic stricken. Some had to be trained in burglary and squatting methods', says Peter.

Another member of the group interviewed in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, said:

ASIAN WRITERS MEET IN LONDON

ANWAR IQBAL on a radical literary reunion

FIFTY YEARS AGO in a small restaurant in Soho, London, four men drafted the charter of an organisation which was to become one of the largest and the most effective literary movements in the history of the Indian sub-continent. Their anniversary meeting — also in London — this week was the first after the partition of India in 1947 in which writers and poets from both India and Pakistan gathered together on one platform.

Though an occasion for celebrations, none of today's members seemed in a jubilant mood. Despite their gains in the literary field, they are still far from achieving the idealistic political goals set by the founders in 1935.

The organisation, called *Anjumani Taraqipasand Musanafeen* (Progressive Writers' Association), produced literary giants like Faiz, Krishan, Manto, Bedi, Ismat and Majaz who radically changed the literary scene in that part of the world. It also enjoyed the patronage of people like Tagore, a Nobel laureate, Prem Chand, the popular short story writer, and Josh, the widely read Urdu poet.

The first progressive writers' conference was held in Lucknow, India, in 1936, a year after the drafting of the charter. A public meeting, it was presided over by Prem Chand and brought together people from all walks of life. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was later to become the first Prime Minister of India, also spoke.

The participants expressed their commitment to the people of the sub-continent, and pledged to participate in people's struggle against oppression and to work for making literature relevant to the realities of life. Since then all big names in literature in the sub-continent have either been formally associated with the movement or informally contributed to its ideology.

IN INDIA, THE history of the progressive writers' movement has always been closely related to that of the Communist Party and it has gone through phases of popularity and decline with the rest of the communist movement. When Sajjad Zaheer, one of the four original signatories to the charter, pushed the movement too close to the Communist Party in the early 40s some of its initial members withdrew. The writers' movement still has some of the big names like Sardar Jafri, Kaifi Azmi, Jazbi and others associated with it, although the communists are currently at a low ebb — divided and losing popularity.

In Pakistan, the organisation was officially banned in 1952 but it has remained alive as a strong voice of defiance even during the periods of tyranny. Despite the ban, writers and poets have never been ashamed of claiming allegiance to its ideology and that includes poets like Faiz, Faraz and Iftikhar Arif.

Refusing to be provoked by the audience, the Pakistani delegation to the London anniversary conference was rather reticent about making comments on the socio-political situation in their country.

However, one speaker claimed that Pakistan was facing an ideological crisis. He said: 'People are being discouraged from thinking and we are being encouraged to imitate and to obey. Words like struggle, defiance and courage are becoming archaic and are being replaced with words like surrender, obedience and loyalty to the people in power' — a far cry from the aspirations for the country nurtured by the founder writers. □

TURKEY

WHAT FUTURE FOR POLITICS?

CHRIS CHRISTENSEN on political realignments

SINCE 1983, WHEN the Turkish military partially lifted the ban on political parties and allowed a limited electoral contest, there has been a fundamental realignment of the country's political forces. With both the centre-left Republican People's Party and the traditional conservatives, the Justice Party, dissolved and their respective leaders banned from active politics until 1992, new political groupings have emerged to fill the vacuum.

On the right, premier Turgut Ozal's Motherland Party has captured much of the ground formerly occupied by Suleyman Demirel's Justice Party — the traditional conservative political force of post-war Turkey. Having emerged as the largest of the parties permitted to contest the November 1983 election, virtually eliminating the military-sponsored National Democratic Party in the process, the Motherland Party consolidated its position in the municipal elections of April 1984, where it gained 41 per cent of the popular vote. This was in the face of a strong challenge from the True Path Party, which is loyal to Demirel.

But despite his recent electoral setbacks, Demirel remains a formidable behind-the-scenes figure on the Turkish political stage. Obliquely referred to in the Turkish press (which is barred from printing his name) as '*Bir Birlem*', or 'he who knows', he has retained a tight grip over his former party machine and prevented any mass defections to the Motherland Party. This has deprived Ozal of a grassroots political base from which to direct his fast-disintegrating monetarist economic revolution, and left him at the helm of precisely the type of unstable right-wing coalition which the military have sought to eradicate.

The Motherland coalition is comprised of technocrats sharing Ozal's monetarist predilections, Islamic fundamentalists and ultra right-wing factions formerly active within the banned neo-fascist National Action Party. Despite its supposed illegality, the National

Action Party is by far the best organised group within Motherland and has effectively taken over the party machine which is run by one of its lawyers, Halil Sivgin. Of the 1,500 municipalities won by Ozal in the 1984 election, 620 are firmly under the control of National Action and the party's influence is also reflected in the higher echelons of state. Former stalwarts have been given cabinet posts — including the education ministry — as well as top positions within the higher civil service.

ON THE LEFT of the spectrum, the process of readjustment to the political order imposed by the military has been particularly painful. Unable to prevent the Republican People's Party structure from disintegrating under the weight of its internal tactical divisions, its leader Bulent Ecevit subsequently refused to countenance the creation of a 'front' party. The initiative was taken up by Erdal Inonu, the son of a former President and leader of the Republicans, with the creation of the Social Democratic Party. Despite being banned from contesting the 1983 assembly elections, the Social Democrats gained 23 per cent of the vote in the municipal elections establishing themselves as the effective opposition. This was despite the party's failure to capitalise upon Republican votes.

However, they are still a force to be reckoned with, boasting over 200,000 members and influential backers within the Turkish labour movement, including the secretary general of the powerful Petrol-Is union. The Social Democrats' success in capturing the centre-left high ground has also spurred Ecevit into action. In August this year a new party, the Democratic Left Party, will be set up by his wife in an attempt to establish a political base before the 1988 elections.

The real problem confronting social democrats in Turkey is whether or not it is possible for a socialist political organisation to function within the terms of the constitution imposed by the military in 1982. Under its terms political parties may not forge links with extra-parliamentary bodies, no such bodies are permitted to engage in political activity, and all criticism of the military is banned. Rights of association are severely curtailed and trade unions subject to compulsory and binding arbitration in the case of strikes. Press laws forbid discussion of any matter likely to threaten the integrity of the state, which, for practical purposes, means anything the military wishes to include.

According to Inonu, the military high command is sufficiently serious about the 'transition to democracy' to permit criticism of the most authoritarian aspects of the constitution. Others are less convinced. Last month, in an interview with the *International Herald Tribune*, Ozal succinctly summarised the prevailing McCarthyite ethos of Turkish politics when he condemned the leaders of the Turkish Peace Association and DISK trade union as 'communists posing as social democrats.' Since both Ozal and the military appear to regard all criticism as equivalent to 'communist conspiracy' and violation of the European Convention on Human Rights as a perfectly respectable political response, the prospect of substantial constitutional reform appears distant. □

LETTERS

Mail's 'expose' exposed

Sushma Lal, Manchester

A few comments need adding on to your article on the *Daily Mail* (NS 9 August). It shouldn't be overlooked that the *Mail* has done the story at a time when the government is bringing in the new Immigration rules. The changes are drastic and their effects far-reaching. The story is a direct attempt to pre-empt any outcry there might be about the government's further steps to reducing black people into second-class citizens.

The 23 complaints received by the Home Office as regards the forced marriages may indicate that the women were unwilling but there is no proof that those marriages were being contracted to facilitate entry for financial or other rewards. None of the community leaders interviewed pointed out that the arranged marriages are a cultural phenomenon and they should be dealt with as such. It is dangerous and improper for the Home Office to pose as a saviour of these women by using the Immigration system.

The *Mail* story lacks balance. No mention was made of the 1,070 husbands and fiancés who were refused entry in 1984 by the Home Office causing considerable misery to their British citizen counterparts. The women involved having tried every legal action have resorted to mobilizing campaigns to win their rights to live with the men they love. The *Daily Mail* had no word of sympathy for them. It would be interesting to see if the NUJ will have anything to say as regards their members' standards of journalism.

Reward those top nobs

Dr Alex Comfort, Kent

The Prime Minister's idea of identity cards for football fans is so good that it should be taken further. In the society she is so industriously creating, there is an urgent need for a Top Person's card. Initially, this would serve to prevent

hooliganism at Ascot and Henley, but its creation could be a means of simplifying life for Top People in other respects. For example, it would iron out any problems with police road blocks, enable its holder to jump waiting lists, carry immunity from tiresome fiscal restraints on pay which were never intended to apply to those eligible for the new card, permit the cardholder to watch uncensored television, and, in the crunch, admit them to one of the nuclear dugouts which will preserve the Herrenvolk.

The life of a Top Person, as the Prime Minister knows, is not easy. This would be a small but welcome step toward a proper recognition of the leadership and initiative which have got us where we are today.

Better than Betty Friedan

Alice Henry, off our backs, USA

In her report of the UN Decade for Women's Conference Janie Hampton (NS 26 July) intimates that the most common line of Third World women is that of Dr Eddah Gachukia saying 'We don't want women to be equal to men, we are different.' Of course, that is also a line used by one group of French feminists, and some American feminists also claim women are biologically disposed to be more nurturant and peaceful, but the thing to remember is that within both the first, second, and third world feminists hold a variety of views on the subject of patriarchy, male domination, sexism, or what might simply be called 'differences' between men and women. For instance, Nawal el Saadawi has said, 'It would be lacking in ambition for women to only want to be equal to men.'

The range of workshops mentioned by Janie Hampton, from women for peace to women fishing, entirely ignores the highly political content of most workshops — like the ones on violence against women, on women's reproductive rights, on Asian immigrants to California fighting against being pushed into dead-end jobs.

Why does she characterise the Peace Tent as a centre for squabbles? Mostly it served as a useful additional meeting place for productive discussion.

For instance, one of the more productive debates on Palestinian issues, organised by New Jewish Agenda and including Palestinian and Jewish women from Israel, was held there.

Janie Hampton seems to look at the superficial top level of everything. She mentions Betty Friedan instead of the over 300 Afro-American, Black women, and women of colour from America who ran many workshops and set up a 'Conversation Corner' that led to a hell of a lot more interchange than Betty Friedan's sitting under a tree.

Zamir and Shamir are not one

Yaacov Keinan, Israeli Embassy

While Scott MacLeod's description and analysis (NS 9 August) of Rabbi Kahane and his effect on Israel politics is disputable, there is one point which is clearly inaccurate. Itzhak Shamir, head of the Likud party, is at present Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister in the government of National Unity headed by Labour's Shimon Peres. Professor Itzhak Zamir is Attorney-General.

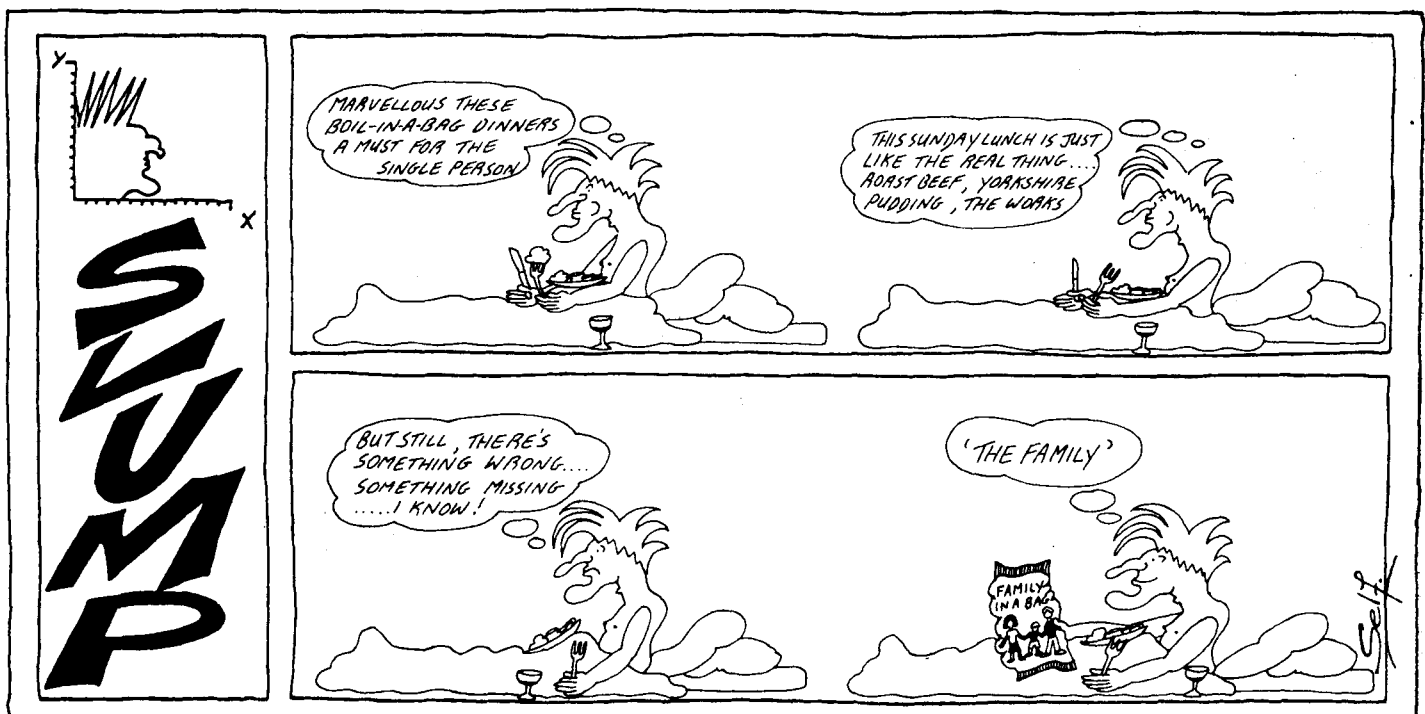
Ed. note: we apologise for this mistake which occurred in editing.

Comparing like with like

John Hedges, Dublin Sinn Fein

Contrary to Conor Ryan's claims (Letters 26 July), the votes gained by H-Block candidates in the 26 Counties in 1981 and the 1985 Sinn Fein vote are not 'more comparable figures' than those I quoted (Letters 19 July) for the 1979 and 1985 Sinn Fein local election votes.

The 1981 H-Block election campaign was a highly emotional and single-issue broad front campaign in support of the prisoners' demands, a campaign with transcended normal political loyalties for many people. The reason why I used the 'raw figures' of the 1979 and 1985 results was due to the fact that they were both specifically Sinn Fein local election votes (the 1981 election was a parliamentary one).



FEEDBACK

Back in charge of what?

BEFORE THE last fortnight, many of us at the BBC looked to the Board of Governors to protect us from a climate of opinion increasingly preoccupied with finding a counterblast to 'The Price Is Right'. They were, it was thought, a body of decent, fairminded men and women who, since constitutionally they are the BBC, would ultimately uphold the idea of serious, independent reporting. We were wrong.

The professional editorial hierarchy who might have been expected to defend the independent reporting of the corporation proved themselves unable to fight off an attempt at interference. Given the ease with which the government got its way on editorial independence, what hope is there of management resisting plans which the Peacock Commission is likely to advance to sweep away the old guarantees of financial independence? Indeed, in anticipation of government recommendations, plans have already been announced to privatise the most vulnerable sectors of staff — cleaners, caterers and security men — an approach characteristic of a management jumping before they're pushed.

The formula eventually cooked up to try to restore credibility and confidence is unconvincing. The Director General's claim to be 'back in charge' is implausible because his stance — changes to the programme and possible transmission sometime in the future — is almost indistinguishable from that of the governors. 'In charge' neither of content nor transmission date, the Board of Management look empty vessels

making one hell of a din.

Few producers would deny that the corporation is flabby and demoralised. Already in important areas like drama we are seen as imitators rather than innovators. The battalions of accountants, administrators and secretaries to supernumeraries grow by the year. Will the Peacock Commission decide that the bracing breeze of advertisements for Instant Whip or sponsorship by Andrex will regenerate the organisation? The present leadership may be weak-kneed, but they are all we have.

The consequence of the *Real Lives* row has been to land the BBC with the worst of both worlds. Those reporters and producers who wish to work in Northern Ireland must now not only fight their way through the inhibiting 'referral upward' system, but must also try to think themselves into the mentality of the governors in order to ensure that they will consider the subject worthy of transmission. Already two separate network programmes have been instructed not to broadcast items on Northern Ireland.

The phrase which strikes gloom into the hearts of producers is the governors' view that the film — even if 'amended' — is not 'suitable for transmission at the present time'. On this argument, any film on any one of half a dozen subjects from Sinn Fein to the National Front could be banned.

The major political question is one of the government's own making. The scribes and

pharisees who have laid into the BBC on the *Real Lives* issue have done so primarily on the grounds that the *British* broadcasting corporation cannot be neutral in dealing with the political wing of an organisation which kills British soldiers. Britain is at war with the IRA, and you wouldn't have given air-time to Hitler would you? The only flaw in this argument is that Britain isn't at war with Sinn Fein — not officially at least. Indeed it has been the policy of successive governments to encourage republican political development in the hope that it renders violence irrelevant. People like Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams spotted, and exploited, the ambiguity at once.

If the worry really is that any comment from representatives of Sinn Fein or the Democratic Unionists will encourage violence then the Home Secretary should have the courage of his convictions and make them illegal organisations. If they are to be allowed to speak on some matters and not on others, then let's have tougher legislation on incitement to violence. It may seem curious for a journalist to argue for restrictions on freedom of speech, but if that is what the government believes then it is up to them to act, not up to journalists to act on their behalf.

In the meantime, the only way to restore some vestige of credibility is to broadcast the film as soon as possible.

A BBC TV producer

Reader Response Rewarded

Right: Hugh Stephenson is still digesting the comments of more than 4,000 readers who responded to our May questionnaire and is planning a number of improvements to the magazine in the Autumn. Here he draws the winner of the £250 first prize in the raffle for respondents — P D Drinkwater of London N7. Free one-year subscriptions to the NS also go to:

N S Williamson, Great Yarmouth; P Dunn, Alcester; J Threlfall, Huddersfield; T Horlick-Jones, Cardiff; N Hardsley, Coventry; J Baker-Rabe, Croydon; H P C Daurat, London; Dr J Loraine, Edinburgh; J Brown, Barnsley; S Edmunds, Oxford; M W Wheeler, Liverpool; M Farmer, Brighton; Dr R Alexander, W Germany; H Lentell, Nottingham; V Gibbs, Orpington; K Forster, Oxford; T R Bailey, Harpenden; M Wimborne, Manchester; T Wylie, Co Tyrone; A Evans, Merthyr;

New Statesman books are now being sent to:

W J Stranz, Redditch; M Freeman, Wembley; J Cleaver, London; I Harrison, Birmingham; A Hudson, London; A B Beattie, Newcastle Upon Tyne; R Eclam, Newcastle Upon Tyne; W A Bell, Whitley Bay; S Tipples, Liverpool; D R Deaton, London; J Prestidge, Bristol; C McCafferty, Glasgow; R Lamb, Greenock; P Baker, London; J Spilling, London; J Colne, London; V Blackett, Sunderland; V Treacher, Henley-on-Thames; J Wilson, Kingston-Upon-Thames; Angela Bibb, New Malden; G M Clarke, Ramsgate; P Lewis, Gwynedd; C Williamson, London; P Risner, Richmond; B Guidi, Penarth; M J Burridge, Grimsby; F Thomas, Glasgow; S Rowenamunt, Weymouth; G Richardson, Stanmore; J F Beal, Leeds; E M Johnson, London; C M Leeder, Halifax; M Muller, Mozambique; Jeremy Leathart, Edinburgh; P White, Derby; P Moran, Edgware; E S St Leger Moore, London; R Grimes, Southampton; A Lacey, Birmingham; R H Bentley, Milton Keynes; C Ure, Oxford; W E Bowers, Cheadle; B Falk, Tunbridge Wells; L Rock, London; D Storry, Loughborough; P W Roberts, Wellingborough; P R Hirsch, London; M Wilkins, London; P A Major, Hong Kong; H Partington, Manchester; B M Hall, Kingswindford; M F MacIver, Southampton; H Rowe, Liverpool; R Barker, London; M Bramley, London; R Cole, Walsall; F Schicker, London; A Finch, Bishops Stortford; P J Crocker, Dorchester; T Jeffrey, London; Dr Holland, Cambridge; D Angus, Galashiels; R Shoebridge, St Blazey; A McDougall, Greenock; E Hole, London; B Gorman, Bexleyheath; S Furnish, Cardiff; J Morris, Shrewsbury; J Tyldesley, Liverpool; Dr Schilling, Leicester; J Kemp, Cheadle; J Devine, Paisley; A Mosley, Glasgow; T Berry, Tywardreath; R Hooper, Edinburgh; Egan, London; D Roper, Cologne; M Child, Edinburgh; P Smith, London; P Welbank, Harpenden; T Maitland, Hastings; K Ravnkilde, Nottingham; H Kaufman, London; J Papadachi, Harlow; K Sarvik, London; G M Addis, Glasgow; H Knight, Manchester; C Grimwood, London; I Hare, Shenfield; M Wilsker, Witney; S Ayling, Woodford Green; F Pellerano, Dominican Republic; J List, Northampton; T Turpin, Bath; S Coppock, London; J Spottiswoode, Lowestoft; J Sayers, London; P Courtney, Devon; N Harries, London; Caroline Taylor, Cambridge.





Writing out of southern Africa

AT THE beginning of this month, Zimbabwe was host to an international book fair. Its focus was a workshop on women and books. BESSIE HEAD (above) was one of the authors invited to speak but, following an airline tickets mix-up, she could not get there. We print here the talk she had prepared.

Bessie Head is one of a small handful of African women writers whose work has attracted considerable acclaim and interest abroad as well as at home. She was born a South African 'coloured' but eventually, finding life intolerable, moved to Botswana where she still lives. Her minute account of the life of her adoptive town was published as *Serowe: village of the rain wind*. Other novels, all published by Heinemann, include *Maru* and *When the rain clouds gather*. Her most autobiographical novel, describing her white mother's relationship with a black groom and subsequent years in a mental hospital, was *A question of power*. Critic Ronald Blythe wrote of it: 'She brilliantly develops ascending degrees of personal isolation and is very moving when she describes abating pain. Her novels have a way of soaring from the rock bottom to the stars and are very shaking.' Her autobiography is to be published soon.

WHEN YOUNG people ask me: 'How do I become a writer?' I always reply that a career in writing first begins with love of reading and a love of books, a feeling for all the magic and wonder that can be communicated through books. I can see no other certain beginning for a career so ill-defined in concrete terms with vague language like in-born talent, in-born gift. This unease and uncertainty haunts a writer all throughout his life — that the most recent manuscript is not the masterpiece his other books were, that he was only capable of producing the one great novel and that his talent is dead forever.

I think no writer ever plans a career in writing, an often miserable occupation filled with anguish, mental blocks and physical and mental exhaustion. In the end all that ever tempted one to tread that road of super-human staying power and stamina that is needed to produce the full-length novel, is a love of books itself. This slow unfolding of writing talent is most aptly described by the French writer, Albert Camus: 'So, you think what you have is your own? What is your own comes to you, bit by bit.'

I have struggled with the young at workshops in Botswana about this reading tradition. They express frustration at their inability to produce the great Botswana novel overnight and deflect their attention to neighbouring countries who have had wars of independence. If they had been guerrillas fighting bloody wars, they would produce these great novels. There is nothing inspiring in Botswana with its peaceful history of colonial occupation, so they say.

In reality the country has a unique colonial history as a British Protectorate — the land, the culture and the people survived almost intact and undisturbed. I know of other British protectorates in Africa where the soul of the people was left intact and undisturbed, the British being mainly interested in resources, not the people, but what is unique about Botswana is that over the 80-year period of British occupation, the country produced two leader images — Khama the Great and his son Tshekedi Khama who asserted black pride and independence and claims to the land. They were men admired in Britain and their personalities lay like a protective mantle over the land, right up until Independence. Here you have ancient Africa almost intact but with many subtle blendings of everything new that was introduced to the people over the centuries. Here you have a people who say: 'Since time immemorial we have done this

... I have drawn on this depth and stability as a writer.

The world of the intellect

Everything is at a beginning. No colonial power ever intended planning for black majority populations. They planned for themselves alone. Education, schools, were introduced by missionary effort, often in an elementary form. Libraries, schools and planning for people were provided after independence. It could be said that a reading tradition was absent in the society. This is not my background. Having no family to rear me I was reared in part by missionaries and had access to large libraries when young. I view my own activity as a writer as a kind of participation in the thought of the whole world. No other occupation provides for such an international outlook as writing. I have my national, my African side but I am also very much an international kind of person.

Writing is not a male/female occupation. My femaleness was never a problem to me, not now, not in our age. More than a century ago, a few pioneer women writers, writing fearfully under male pseudonyms, established that women writers were brilliant thinkers too, on a par with men. I do not have to be a feminist. The world of the intellect is impersonal, sexless. The young struggle with questions of literacy, nationalism in Africa. It is constructive to outline to the young the road one has travelled, the themes one has worked on in one's private workshop and the way in which life conspired to make one a writer. I have worked outside all political and other ideologies, bowing to life here and there and absorbing all that I felt to be relevant, but always fighting for space and air. I needed this freedom and independence, in order that I retain a clarity of thought, in order that my sympathies remain fluent and responsive to any given situation in life. I offer a brief outline of my major themes, the major shaping influences in my life.

A bit of Christianity

I was steeped in it when young and have a *thorough acquaintance with the bible and the life of Jesus Christ* but Christianity and formal church going were never going to be an expansive way of life for me. However, I value my early background and training with its ideal service to life. I value that vivid, great short story teller, Jesus Christ, and the foundation he laid for such terms as mankind, the human race and love of one's neighbour.

It was a question often asked of him: 'Lord, who is my neighbour?' And he would reply with a little story about a Jew who was attacked on the highway by



Tshekedi Khama's nephew Seretse Khama takes the presidential oath on Botswana's independence — does continuity and a peaceful colonial history prevent the Great Novel being written?

robbers. Many Jews passed by and ignored the injured man until a Samaritan chanced by and offered assistance of all kinds to the injured man. Or he would tell about being thirsty at a well and a foreign woman, not a Jewish woman, would offer him a drink of water. It was as if, from then onwards, individual thinkers and philosophers expanded on this theme. Mankind never began as mankind but as small tribal groups and nations.

I accept as valid a proposition made by an American anthropologist, Ruth Benedict, that the roots of racial prejudice and nationalism go deep. In her book *Patterns Of Culture*, she writes:

Now modern man has made this thesis (our own local ways) one of the living issues in his thought and in his practical behaviour, but the sources of it go far back into what appears to be, from its universal distribution among primitive peoples, one of the earliest of human distinctions, the difference in kind between 'my own' closed group and the outsider. All primitive tribes agree in recognising this category of the outsiders, those who are not only outside the provisions of the moral code which holds within the limits of one's own people, but who are summarily denied a place anywhere in the human scheme.

A great number of tribal names in common use, Zuni, Dene, Kiowa, and the rest, are names by which primitive peoples know themselves, and are only their native terms for 'the human beings', that is, themselves. Outside of the closed group there are no human beings. And this is in spite of the fact that from an objective point of view each tribe is surrounded by peoples sharing in its arts and material

inventions, in elaborate practices that have grown up by a mutual give-and-take of behaviour from one people to another. Primitive man never looked out over the world and saw mankind. From the beginning he was a provincial who raised the barriers high. Whether it was a question of choosing a wife or of taking a headman, the first and most important distinction was between his own human group and those beyond the pale. His own group, and all its ways of behaving, was unique.

A bit of Pan-Africanism

That primitive way of life, outlined above, 'we the human beings, our closed group outside of which there are no human beings,' underlies the social order of South Africa. There is only one race of humans there, the white race. Anything black or tainted with black has been abhorred, detested, reviled, abused and exploited. My personal feeling is that people, when faced with a power structure that attempts to destroy their humanity, find ways and means of keeping their humanity intact. I feel that the older generations used Christianity to keep their humanity intact because we were all faced with generations of older people who were pious, humble, deferential and saintly Christians.

The African National Congress, which is now so militant, was once an expression of that humble deference. The ANC received a shaking-up in the 1950s when Robert Sobukwe broke away from their youth wing to found the Pan Africanist Congress. Sobukwe's view was Pan African and he personally included all things African, but with an edge of harshness that forced one to make an

identification with Africa and a sense of belonging to Africa. That edge of harshness was all right for me. Like most black people born in South Africa, I lived with a very broken sense of history. A very brief encounter with Robert Sobukwe helped me to adjust and get a sense of balance. He gave me a comfortable black skin in which to live and work. Apart from this slight acquaintance with the world of politics and power, I have carefully avoided politics and power, both in a personal capacity and in my work. My world is a quiet backwater where ideas and inventions dominate and where people have time to love each other.

The inspiration of Bertolt Brecht

Sometimes a book burns its way into one's mind and is never forgotten. This was so with an early biography I read of the German playwright, Bertolt Brecht — *A Choice Of Evils* — published in 1960. The biography divided Brecht's life into three main phases:

There was Brecht, the gay young man who produced the *Three Penny Opera* and who could turn the whole city of Berlin upside down.

There was Brecht, after he had read *Das Kapital* and became the great convert to Marxism.

There was Brecht in his exile in the United States during the Hitler era and his final return to Berlin.

It was the middle phase that fascinated me. It was Germany between the two world wars when the Deutsche Mark was so inflated that it could hardly purchase a box of matches. Brecht applied his mind to creating a new social order. He began to produce the didactic, teaching plays. He had students of the University of Berlin research for him how a whole town could be re-shaped along Marxist lines. He would sit in a room full of students and have each student read out his research. From a consensus of opinion he would shape the didactic plays. They could read like an educational sing-song:

In this town we will have so many schools. In these schools we will have so many pupils. In these schools we will teach the following subjects. . .

Brecht came from a poor peasant background. With him ordinary mankind came into his own and he was the rich, creative artist who could make a dry and difficult doctrine like Marxism live. Ordinary people are full of ribald fun and humour and in Brecht this promise was always there — that it would be fun to re-shape the world. There is in me the same love for counting chairs and tables and planning for people, with the same promise of fun and unpredictable humour.

Experiments with the new

My life spans two countries in southern Africa, South Africa and Botswana. I acquired my education in South Africa but wrote all my books in Serowe, Botswana. When I arrived in the village of Serowe in 1964, the people were about to engage in a gigantic co-operative and educational project. It was inspired by the man, Patrick van Rensburg, who had resigned from the South African diplomatic service and who wished to make a constructive contribution to southern Africa. But the people of Serowe had been engaged like this in the past under their chiefs, and been very independently concerned with their own progress. The people would experiment with anything — new ideas for educational progress, new agricultural techniques, new anything. It was a phase that lasted eleven years and then ceased abruptly. But I recorded everything, counting tables and chairs in great detail. It was Bertolt Brecht who gave me the courage to write like that.

A reverence for people

A discipline I have observed is an attitude of love and reverence to people. I have used the word God, in a practical way, in my books. I cannot find a substitute word for all that is most holy but I have tried to deflect people's attention into offering to each other what they offer to an Unseen Being in the sky. When people are holy to each other, war will end, human suffering will end.

It is rather its spiritual side that concerns me. I believe that all the nations of the earth are drawing closer to each other. I deal in human grandeur as a writer and recognise it when I see it. I would propose that mankind will one day be ruled by men who are God and not greedy, power-hungry politicians. I see this achievement as not the effort of a single man but a collaboration of many great minds in order that an integrity be established in the affairs of men. Only then can the resources of the earth be cared for and shared in an equitable way among all mankind.

Hand in hand with world government I clearly foresee a new race of people — not nations or national identity as such but rather people who are a blending of all the nations of the earth. Its beginnings are already there so I do not see any of this as being forced on people, but that it is the natural outcome of mankind's slow spiritual unfoldment over the centuries. These are the themes that have preoccupied me as a writer. ☐

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The Prudence Farmer Poetry Prize

The Prudence Farmer Prize of £100 is awarded annually for the best poem, in the judge's opinion, to have appeared in the New Statesman during the previous 12 months. This year's judge was DEREK MAHON, a former Poetry Editor of the NS, who has chosen 'Higher Things' by Stephen Romer, published in the issue of 4 January 1985 and here reprinted. Mr Romer teaches at the British Institute in Paris.

WHETHER s/he likes it or not, anyone who publishes a poem in the NS automatically enters a competition. As the Literary Editor knows, I don't believe in poetry competitions: it's not a competitive activity. But she knows too that I'm an inconsistent sort of fellow, susceptible to arm-twisting; so here I am, making a once-in-a-lifetime exception and wishing I hadn't. The present Poetry Editor, Hugo Williams, is a fine poet in his own right and a friend of mine; so imagine the pain with which I have to admit that most of the poems published during the past 12 months seem to me pretty terrible, and not even interestingly so. This isn't Hugo's fault but a fault of the times; though his fascination with kitsch, which makes him such a brilliant TV critic, may have led him astray. (You still speaking to me, Hugo?) It's not just the NS. Look at the *Listener*, the *TLS*, the *London Review of Books*: with few exceptions, the poems are so dull as to be barely readable. Even the poets' names are barely readable, most of them, so drearily familiar have they become. If the poets I'm concerned with here share a redeeming feature it's that few of them are well known names. What Claude Rains in *Casablanca* called 'the usual suspects' are missing, for the most part, and a good thing too; but even the unknown, the first-time-published, can bore you stiff as well.

An American friend complained to me recently about the state of the art over there: the poets lack, he said, a sense of 'soul, song and formal necessity'. Word-processors, computers programmed in the graduate schools, they all read alike: open any issue of the *American Poetry Review*. The same is true in England, even in Scotland and Wales, even in Ireland; but England, with its love of light verse and nostalgia for poets in uniform, is the chief culprit. No doubt all this has something to do with the loss of empire and failure to find a role; though here's one Irishman who long ago lost patience with that particular moan. The role is obvious — to start again — and only imaginative cowardice on a national scale has so far prevented its adoption. Hughes, Hill, Harrison: there are poets to tell us of that lost domain, the hidden England, from which the new England will one day grow; but they cry in a wilderness of academic preciousness and suburban deprecation.

But to the stuff itself. My shortlist contained poems by Vicki Feaver, Raymond Tong, Paul Groves, Michael Hofmann, Denis Knight and Stephen Romer. Alert readers will immediately notice that there is only one woman and accuse

me of tokenism. Not guilty: Vicki Feaver's 'Ironbridge' (14/6/85) was one of the best of the bunch. But I was sorry to find no Adcock, Stevenson, Couzyn, Rumens or Kantaris this year — all of them spirited, skilled practitioners and more fun to read than their (mostly) wet male contemporaries. Of the (unwet) men present, Tong impressed me with two poems about badgers that didn't read like Hughes pastiche:

A young woman sobs bitterly
into relentless television cameras
and angrily refuses to move away,
frantically clinging to the trunk of a tree
on a wintry Gloucestershire hillside. . .
(*'Gassing the Badgers'*, 21-28/12/84)

The theme is entirely contemporary and connects with the mythic; the mis-spelling of 'frantically' adds to the frantic urgency of the situation; and strong emotions are engaged. But he spoils this beginning with a deprecating climb-down:

Although sympathising with her good intentions
most viewers may feel she is over-reacting.

Not at all; she's doing fine. Now, if the poem could have sobbed bitterly like that. . .

Paul Groves's 'Coming In To Land'

(17/5/85) looks different: lines broken up, Pound-fashion, to create an airiness and suggest the possibility of a 'natural', organic rhythm. It's set in Nova Scotia, which makes a change: besides, I've always rather fancied Nova Scotia (of the poems of Elizabeth Bishop, Brian Moore's *I Am Mary Dunne* and the Canadian pictures of the much-maligned Tomi Ungerer). But here again an English disease is rife: censorious abstraction, *l'esprit de géométrie*, Donald Davie-ism:

A farm motors by at sixty; barns
show off their angles, Pythagorean showgirls.
Then the strip: finite, demanding discipline.

The hell with finitude and discipline, you want to shout: tell us something new!

I could say the same, if less violently, to Michael Hofmann, last year's Prudence Farmer judge, a first-rate and deservedly well known young poet who seems to have got his needle stuck in a groove, listing random and esoteric information, personal and historical, in a peculiarly (deceptively?) flat tone of voice. The tone derives, I think, from Lowell's *Life Studies*, though the influence has been fully assimilated. A Hofmann poem like 'The Means of Production' (31/5/85), with its unrhymed quatrains, *Weltschmerz* and slight punk coloration, is instantly recognisable as such, and this is the trouble:

you snipe
at your nails, making the sparks fly.
The radio updates its bulletins
every hour, guarding you against surprises.
The living breath of the contemporary. . .

This is the world we know, all right, and those nail-clippings are the work of a real (post-

Higher things

Stephen Romer

I wish I could, like Soren Kierkegaard,
be absolute and let her face recede

until it is an island in the water
he called memory. Nothing impure

could touch his lasting image of Régine.
Only in memory is love immune

from longing to be with her all the time.
He kept a candle burning in each room,

unfinished manuscript on every desk.
I shall need all his courage for the task

of settling firmly to the sublime;
there is only her face to start from.

A warning

Denis Knight

In winter the unregarded sea at Brighton
Neatly expels our daily bits of rubbish
To this high tide mark for bored sea-gulls
To inspect, and disapprove of: an expulsion order
Patiently made out, yet with a warning
From the Moon to the isolated race of man
Of other, bloodier banishments to come.

Martian?) poet; but he's done it before. The disabusement, the wisened-up attention to detail, the vaguely Spenglerian weather have become familiar Hofmann trademarks. It's time for a change. (Still speaking to me, Michael?)

Denis Knight is a new name to me. I know nothing about him, but 'A Warning' (18/1/85) deserves to be quoted in full. Gravesian in its vatic assurance, it is admirably unembarrassed by its cosmic theme, which it carries off with an air. I'm awarding it second prize: a pat on the back. Its brevity disqualifies it from first place, which goes to Stephen Romer for 'Higher Things' (4/1/85). This one, too, is notably brief;

but Romer distinguishes himself by emotional candour and intellectual clarity. His love poem is free of irony and deprecation; and I enjoy the slight pretentiousness of comparing oneself to Kierkegaard. It was he who wrote: 'Our age is essentially one of understanding and reflection, without passion, momentarily bursting into enthusiasm and shrewdly relapsing into repose' (*The Present Age*, tr. Alexander Dru). That shrewd repose is the enemy of art and another symptom of the English disease. Romer, a student of the best French poets (Bonnefoy, Jaccottet), aims higher — 'the sublime', no less! — and reminds us of what it's all about. □

PAPERBACKS

An everyday story of powerful folk

Alan Brien

'IT IS NOT WHAT a person is that counts but what people think he is.' According to Peter Collier and David Horowitz in **The Kennedys** (Pan, £3.50) this cynical, Mephistophelian credo of old Ambassador Joe, Father-God as well as God-Father to his vast clan, was piously observed by his descendants. And there is little doubt that as a self-serving text, at least during their life-times, it served them well.

What they failed to anticipate was dying on the verge of middle-age. Early death allows people to catch up with what you were, rather than what you pretended to be, within the span of your contemporaries. So it is that, the more we learn about the Kennedys, the less we want to know if we hope to preserve our media-fed illusions. From being almost a collateral branch of the Holy Family, they now begin to resemble the Bostonian Brothers Karamazov.

As one who does not remember where he was when President Jack was assassinated, I would welcome this 720-page volume if only because it is clearly the definitive version. After this, I will not need to inquire further. But I also salute it as superb entertainment for the intellectually curious as well as those who appreciate a generous slice of the higher gossip about our rulers of scarcely-yesterday. With this in hand, you won't miss TV on a wet holiday. It is *Dallas* in 3-D on a giant screen.

Just the story of patriarch Joe — hypocrite, lecher, anti-Semite, coward, snob, money-

grubber — is worth the price of admission. A self-made monster, he did not even have the excuse of growing up in ignorance and poverty. He may have truly loved one person not a relative, his 'business partner' Gloria Swanson; he was willing to sacrifice anything for her — almost. After they split, her ex-husband Wallace Beery was shown the contract she had signed with her lover for the making of movies. He proclaimed it unique even in the Hollywood jungle — profits were to be split 50/50. But all losses were down to her.

The only danger with *The Kennedys* is that it could make current politicians almost credible. FDR, who had rewarded Joe Kennedy with the Ambassadorship to Britain, kept tabs on his defeatist double-dealings during the Munich years through the FBI. And one of their main sources was *The Week*, the explosive newsletter written by Claud Cockburn, two of whose novels are re-issued by Hogarth at £3.95 each.

Cockburn remains most widely known for his best-selling volumes of apparently outspoken autobiography, collected by Penguin in *I, Claud*. Only his friends seemed to notice how little of his internal, emotional life was ever exposed there. For instance, two earlier wives and their children have vanished like Old Bolsheviks from the Soviet Encyclopaedia. Claud's credo was nearer to 'It's not what a person is, but what he *does*, that counts'.

This may account for the gap between

Ballantyne's Folly and **Beat the Devil**. The first, written in 1969, must have been, even then, a rather dated resort comedy, somewhat in the E. F. Benson mode, leavened by oddly undigested gobbets of black farce with hints of incest, a violent martyrdom and liberal social protest. It never feels as if it were happening in the Sixties, or even in England.

The second, written in 1949, does not attempt to go beyond the facade of its people and analyse their interior thoughts or feelings. All is on the surface, a controlled parody of a highly formalised genre — the Amblerish exile thriller. But what a surface: glittering, glossy, full of double visions and reflected reflections, much funnier, sharper and more intellectually perceptive than the rather over-rated film.

Another voice from the past that speaks with undimmed vivacity, wit and intelligence is that of D. J. Enright in **Academic Year** (£3.50) one of Oxford's 20th Century Classics. Published in 1955, this first novel following in the wake of Amis and Wain was well reviewed, but nevertheless rather neglected. Certainly, I missed it. Yet it has a depth, seriousness, perhaps most of all a maturity that both *Lucky Jim* and *Hurry On Down* lack. Of course, Enright has in-built advantages. Instead of soft, boring, safe post-war Britain, his scholarly careerists have a background of exotic Alexandria, street riots and roof-top cocktail parties, beautiful strange women and ghostly strange men, murder, betrayal and comedy. It is a world that has become a familiar background from TV news but all the more fascinating for that. The measure of the difference is that perhaps the most memorable character is a foreigner, the ambiguous Marcel, who has more of a Proustian touch than his first-name.

Terence Kilmartin's **A Guide to Proust** (Penguin, £3.95) is exactly that and who better to play Virgil as we explore Proust's divine comedy than the brilliant reviser/renovator of Scott Moncrieff's slightly dust-laden translation. He has not shirked any problems, dividing the entries into four sections — characters, themes, places, real persons — so that it is also possible to read it for its incidental quotes. For example, I wanted to check whether a remark I often attribute to Proust is genuine, or possibly my own — 'Photographs make you forget what people really look like'. It is not mentioned, so I am now staking my claim. But there is an even better remark — 'the earlier the photograph the older a woman looks in it' — which I wish I had not drawn to your attention since I also covet it.

Often when I recommend, or even read, what seem to be fairly heavy, donnish philosophical or historical works, even preferring them as bed-time or holiday companions, there are those who suggest that I must be either a poseur or a freak. And yet I think of myself as incurably light-minded. I read only what I enjoy. If it is boring, I stop, even in farces, thrillers, pornographic entertainments, Marx.

One exception I make, and that is books full of quotations. I can skip the crust and eat the meat. I started Raymond Williams's **The Country and the City** (Hogarth, £4.50) seeing from a quick flip that I would at least be introduced to a lot of new material from unread authors. Before long I realised once more that he is the perfect tutor. The first things he says seem so obvious,

so easy, so familiar that you follow him without thinking, like a child being led into the sea. Before you know it you are in the middle of a dangerous ocean, out of sight of the usual landmarks, and still hanging on. Finally, you emerge on another shore, once again in a recognisable world, but a changed person.

For Colin Watson fans, and to read him is to become an addict, I will not need to mention that another two are in paperback, **Broomsticks over Flaxborough** and **Whatever's Been Going on at Mumblesby?** (Methuen, £3.50): crime novels with all the qualities of the old Christie-style puzzle yet with a sprightly humour, a cutting turn of phrase and, if not a radical attitude, at least one that is sceptical and un-sentimental. □

FICTION

Snake and ladder

Bill Greenwell

The West Pier

PATRICK HAMILTON Viking £8.95

IN 1972, writing of Patrick Hamilton, J.B. Priestley felt sure that 'there must be a whole generation of readers who know nothing about him and his fiction'. Certainly this must still be true. I'd never encountered him except — as Priestley also speculated — as the playwright of the unexceptional *Gaslight*. For this reason, the wild hilarity of *The West Pier*, first published in 1952 and unaccountably never reprinted 'til this year, came as a welcome astonishment.

Hamilton wrote 11 novels between 1925 and 1955. He died, an alcoholic cinder, in 1962, aged 58. Priestley accorded him that most damaging accolade: 'a master among minor novelists'. Such epithets are all too liable to blot the reputation of real genius and this republication of *The West Pier* arrived with a more boggling recommendation still: '“The best novel written about Brighton” — Graham Greene'.

The West Pier is the first of three novels about a lovably loathsome swindler, Ernest Ralph Gorse. We meet him as a schoolboy and then, aged 18, in 1921. The schoolboy engineers the persecution of an innocent contemporary in the matter of an allegedly stolen torch with that most magical property — the ability to throw green, red or white light. He also robs a young girl of sevenpence ha'penny. The majority of the novel, however, concerns the teenager's careful plot to trick 65 quid from an impressionable shopgirl. Both Gorse and his prey, Esther, are social snobs, as are practically all Hamilton's characters.

Gorse is a masterly creation, an unemotional schemer who practises his reptilian charm upon the petty-minded, the pea-brained, the witless scorers of tiny social points. He is not credited with intelligence, only with sufficient skill to trick his victims out of every last penny. Nor is he presented as supremely deft. He is liable to bungle. He simply batters on those sufficiently credulous to believe him. And his skill is to

parody every social inanity going. In effect, Gorse is a nasty shadow of his compassionate creator, since Hamilton is a highly 'astute social botanist', a phrase used in this novel's successor, *Mr Stimpson and Mr Gorse* — which is, if anything, even funnier.

Hamilton is a pastmaster of social rigmarole, of the trite and trifling gambits with which people attempt to elevate their status. He has a brilliant ear for the fibbing banalities of bar-talk, the phoney pleasantries of casual acquaintance, the dreadful airs and disgraces of that class of people for whom there are hundreds of rungs on the social ladder. In *The West Pier*, he excels in his descriptions of schoolboy one-upmanship and the nonsensical banter of Getting Off. Hamilton's best tactic is to comment on every foible with a sublime mock-pedantry, in an explanatory deadpan assisted by his use of quick paragraphs.

Priestley rather disparaged the Gorse books, thinking them shorter on creative energy than the two Hamiltons still in print, *Hangover Square* and *The Slaves of Solitude*. I disagree, with the fervency of instant conversion. □

Deep waters

Paul Roazen

The Psychoanalytic Movement: Or The Coming of Unreason

ERNEST GELLNER Paladin £3.50

THIS IS A brilliantly written book, every page sparkling with intelligence, style and substance. The author's name first came to public attention in 1959 with his daring dissection of the dominant school of late 1950s British philosophy. Although Gellner indicates here his appreciation of the reasons why denouncers thought his *Words and Things* an atrociously bad book, its publication was a memorable event in intellectual history.

Gellner's newest book, which a generation from now he might repudiate, is a marvel of civilised intelligence. He has attempted to explain the bases for the success of psychoanalysis. He is correct in thinking that an astonishing revolution in our ideas has come about. Freud's system of thought, with all its flaws, has so fundamentally altered how we think about human behaviour as to become 'the dominant idiom for the discussion of the human personality and of human relations'.

In this book Gellner tries to show the ways in which cultural patterns account for the success of the psychoanalytic belief system. In an intellectually deterministic way, he interprets the flourishing of psychoanalysis as part of a backlash against a sickly and complacent vision of humankind. Bloodless and unrealistic accounts of motivation inspire dubious counter-theories. Gellner treats psychoanalysis respectfully, acknowledging how Freud's work has permanently changed how we think about ourselves. At the same time he understands the defects in the logic of psychoanalytic propositions and, in an original and lively way,

points out the reasons why such beliefs should have gained wide currency.

Provincialism is hard to escape, however. David Hume, and the whole British philosophic tradition for that matter, may be sacred, but they do not exhaust the ambitious problem Gellner has set out for himself. Nor does an odd footnote or reference to Friedrich Nietzsche do much to help. If one wants to understand why Freud triumphed, then some comparative cultural perspective is necessary. Why did books simultaneously published in English do so much better in America than England? The uneven rate of Freud's influence in France has not yet been accounted for, and the current obsession with psychoanalysis in Paris is as astonishing as the rarity of Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir's having taken Freud so seriously in the 1940s. The Dutch responded to Freud as quickly (before World War I) and as permanently as the Americans, while the Israelis have never paid much attention to psychoanalysis. How Stalin closed down depth psychology in the late 1920s is another chapter. Gellner makes a flip comment about the Japanese and psychoanalysis, yet a history exists of what happened to Freud's concepts there. Both India and Latin America have their own tales. John Stuart Mill thought that comparative culture was the equivalent in social science of experimentation in the natural sciences, and Gellner might have followed through this insight of a heroic forefather in social thought.

Gellner understands the logic of psychoanalysis as a guild, though the title of his book is misleading about the core of his discussion. He is interested in the problem of the power relation of analysand and analyst but does not pursue the history of the relationship of psychoanalysts and their pupils.

This book will enlighten all who yearn for the latest and most sophisticated answer to Adolf Grunbaum's critique of psychoanalysis. Karl Popper succeeded in permanently raising the issue of the testability (i.e. falsifiability) of psychoanalytic thinking. Gellner provides a welcome and literate overview of the latest philosophic controversy about the logical status of psychoanalytic propositions.

If Gellner has sought to make the 'central aim' of his book that of specifying about psychoanalysis how 'the intricate and elegant structure of that system fitted in with the distinctive social and intellectual condition of mankind in our age,' he has failed. But just as no real encounter, with a person or an idea, should be assessed a mistake, this book is — whatever its inadequacies — still a marvel. Its every page instructs and enlivens and represents a tribute to humane intelligence.

Gellner is particularly strong on analogies between religious convictions and psychoanalytic ideologies. But the breadth of his knowledge does not excuse a few howlers. Freud was not a psychiatrist. And Ernest Jones's authorised biography of Freud ought to be cited in its full three-volume edition. Janet Malcolm is an incompetent source about Karl Menninger's analyst's analyst, as on most psychoanalytic issues. And it is a pity that some of Gellner's citations of local pundits are insular, although it is a universal fate to be bounded by one's own cultural horizons. □

Shorter reviews

Cecil Beaton: The Authorised Biography
HUGO VICKERS *Weidenfeld* £16.95

Hugo Vickers is a dish, to judge by the photo on the inside back dust-jacket of this, his second biography. Since I've fallen in love with him as a result, just as he describes Beaton falling for Garbo's image, I'm almost disqualified from making any remarks except ... except that certain of Vickers's phrases are lamentably anaphrodisiac: on p291 'a Jew row', to refer to the 1938 uproar in New York when Beaton wrote of 'damned kikes' in a piece for *Vogue*; earlier, on p240, in reference to one of Beaton's secretaries, 'a woman who would display the most jealous and spiteful attributes of the lesbian character'; on p531 the preposterous description of Patrick Garland as 'a rare heterosexual in the theatre world'.

Either young Hugo is a bit silly (*he wrote lovingly*) or showing some of the marks of Cain from writing high-society biogs — his first was of someone called Gladys, Duchess of Marlborough, who has made no impression on my own tentative grasp of British history (*he wrote rudely*). However Beaton as a national figure *did* make an impression, and may have affected British politics if his caressing photos of George VI's consort, a series he began in 1939, were significant in the manufacture of the modern monarchy. An immortal artist with the camera though mortified by doubts that photography has any worth, Beaton has left an archive which will be raided, world surviving, for the rest of time. He deserves his write-up even at 656 pp, with too few of his most-posed pictures.

Anaphrodisiac jolts aside, and mustering all the objectivity I can in the face of my feelings for Weidenfeld's inside dust-jacket, this is a smashing biography for a reason no other reviewer, so far as I've noticed, has quite made overt. Beaton, wit with a lens, did for 'Cecil' what Wilde did for 'Oscar' — and had to carry his version of that burden to the age of 76 (he died in 1980). 'Backs to the wall,' said a Suez-based RAF photo-reconnaissance unit in 1942, expecting his arrival (p 256). Episode after episode in Vickers shows the ravages that were done to his self-confidence as artist and as lustful being by his fear of himself as 'nancy boy', gross term of the era.

Andrew Lumsden

Mary, After the Queen: Memories of a Working Girl

ANGELA HEWINS *Oxford* £8.95

'Er says we ain't good enough, Mam. We ain't respectable. Well, that's what er says: I'm a scruff! I said: 'I'm not, Mam!' I was miraculously clean, always. That was what hurt so, when he said, 'My mother says you're a scruff.'

Mary's memories are those of growing up and working in Stratford-upon-Avon between the wars. It is a class-ridden society, not yet liberated by the onset of mass education (Mary's chief acquaintance with the school is the hours she spends cleaning it). Furthermore, the precise gradations of class are calculated to a nicety. The best and brightest of Mary's friends could hope to work at J. C. Smith's, the local store. The arrival of Woolworth's in Stratford provides another opening, but still for the 'better class of girl'. The mass could expect nothing more than the local factories. Grammar school boys were 'beings from another planet'.

Mary begins her working life at the aluminium factory, which she soon leaves to join her friends at

the brewery. It is while working at the brewery that Mary meets her lover and the father of her child, one of the glamorous and out-of-reach grammar school boys. Like many a working-class girl of that time who dreamt of something better, Mary meets her 'come uppance' and is deserted.

Angela Hewins tells us in her afterword that Mary's lover was finally traced to Los Angeles (an entirely appropriate location). Ironically, it is he and not Mary who regrets what is past.

Mary's story is reported with both skill and vigour. The strong rhythms of her speech emerge distinctly from the page, evoking the world of 50 years ago.

Jo-Ann Goodwin

Operation Moses: The Untold Story of the Exodus of the Falasha Jews from Ethiopia
TUDOR PARFITT *Weidenfeld* £8.95

'Operation Moses', the transportation of the Falashas, or Jewish Ethiopians, to Israel, was one of the most dramatic and controversial developments associated with the recent Ethiopian famine. For Ethiopia the airlift meant the near-disappearance of one of the oldest of its peoples and the rupture of a link with its pre-Christian past. For Israel the 'Operation' had ethnic consequences, making it a multi-racial country of 'black Jews' as well as 'white'. For the Falashas the airlift, despite its religious justification and material advantage, posed the problem of whether their distinctive culture, which had endured in Ethiopia for two thousand years, albeit precariously, would survive in Israel.

The 'Operation' raises many problems, such as whether the vast sum expended on the airlift, and on subsequent resettlement, would not have been more usefully spent on local projects benefiting a larger number of people.

Tudor Parfitt, a lecturer in Hebrew at the School of Oriental and African Studies, has few such worries. Instead he offers an exciting, revelation-packed account of the 'latest of Israel's daring international exploits'. Speed of writing has unfortunately prevented him from researching deeply into either Ethiopian history or the current situation in that country. He too often presents the Falashas as a people apart, without showing that many features he describes, such as their wedding-night insistence on virginity and their belief in a Messiah called Theodore, were fully shared by many other Ethiopians. He says he heard someone cite a proverb 'The sky has no pillar and the Falasha has no land', but fails to explain that this was an adaptation of an old Ethiopian saying applicable to Muslims. More serious are the book's errors of fact. To cite but two: Emperor Sartsa Dengel, the conqueror of the Falashas, did *not* obtain his guns from the Portuguese embassy of 1520, but captured them from the Turks. The present Ethiopian Government does *not* classify Roman Catholics as believers of a 'foreign religion', but on the contrary classes them, with Orthodox Ethiopian Christians, as adherents of a faith long established in the country.

Parfitt and his publishers are to be commended on their speed in bringing out this offering, but it is to be regretted that it lacks an index, let alone references or an adequate bibliography.

Richard Pankhurst

Schools for the Boys? Co-education Reassessed

PAT MAHONY *Hutchinson/Explorations in Feminism Collective* £3.95

Having suffered — as I saw it until reading this book — from a single-sex education, I have always argued that whatever the proven academic disadvantages, a mixed comprehensive does at least give girls a

healthier and more normal attitude to boys than my generation had.

Sadly, I am forced to change my mind by the cogency and logic of Ms Mahony's writing. Girls, far from becoming friends with their male peer group, are subjected to verbal, physical and sexual abuse in and out of the classroom, are denied both teacher attention and time, are jostled out of the playground, ridiculed if they show ability and generally occupy a marginal position in school life. Their not unexpected response is to play safe by keeping to the traditional sex role expectations and opting for silence and passivity.

Ms Mahony argues that this state of affairs is inevitable in an education system which is male and white dominated. Since the 1944 Education Act, she points out, girls' education is still seen largely in terms of their social function. As long as our society remains a patriarchal one — and she runs through the arguments as to why this is so — school will reflect the world outside its walls.

There are hopeful signs, though. Change is possible and is beginning to take place in schools where a conscious effort has been made to introduce a whole school policy directed at ending sexual inequality. For the time being, an important part of this policy seems to be single-sex groupings — particularly for non-traditional subjects — where girls can gain the self-confidence and assertiveness they will need to change the boys' attitudes. Interestingly, in these schools, the girls are becoming more of a problem as they learn to question the education they are receiving and the structure of the school. For those teachers who believe in perpetuating the system whereby education prepares young people to take their place in society as conforming adults, this change is not always welcome.

Julia Hagedorn

We can stop the crime of the century ...

HUMANIZING HELL!

THE LAW V.
NUCLEAR WEAPONS
GEORGE DELF



The most important contribution
to the nuclear debate so far

pb £6.95
Hamish Hamilton

FICTION

Death in Venice

John Clute

Stone Virgin

BARRY UNSWORTH *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95

The Face of the Waters

SIMON RAVEN *Blond* £8.95

Polaris and Other Stories

FAY WELDON *Hodder* £8.95

The Old Forest

PETER TAYLOR *Chatto/Hogarth* £9.95

BULGING LIKE a teardrop into its poisonous lagoon, Venice boasts a geography so graspable for purposes of art that it comes as a surprise not that so many stories are set there, but so few. In its fatal intercourse with the sea, the city models an inherent tendency of the Western mind to see the world as a series of dire consequences: the old familiar marriages of love and death, art and decay, power and corruption, sex and drowning.

Stone Virgin, a tale of love and death, art and decay, power and corruption and sex and drowning, has been set by Barry Unsworth, who is a deft and canny teller of tales, in the best place possible to add depth and a sense of the sorrows of time to a story that might otherwise seem marginally overblown. Conservation expert Simon Raikes has been called to Venice to restore a 15th-century Madonna, almost instantly to be haunted by the intricate circumambient city whose every vista seems to embody and to intensify his veil-rending obsessions. For he is an epileptic and, succumbing to seizures in the Virgin's presence, catches glimpses of an epiphanic Venetian past: bodies in clean rapture; hints of events that must have occurred when the sculpture was whole; a light as golden as childhood.

While this is going on, Unsworth omnisciently weaves into the main text two smaller narratives, the story of the artist who carved the Virgin in 1432 and of an 18th-century rake who seduced a woman in her shadow. Raikes's visions are of events from these two narratives. It seems that we are in the world — it is not an ignoble one — of the Venetian tales of Vernon Lee and Daphne du Maurier, for Raikes's visions can only be supernaturally derived. It is precisely at this point, however, that *Stone Virgin* slips into a slightly tedious mundanity — for Unsworth is clearly unwilling to give his novel any supernatural warrant.

The ending isn't much helped, either, by this refusal to tie the knots. Raikes falls in love with a woman whose family has been darkly involved with the Virgin throughout its history and it begins to look as though he's destined to reenact the same fatal sequence of passions that uplifted but then destroyed his predecessors. Perhaps wittingly, she has involved him in the death by the drowning of her artist husband; he is in sexual thrall to her — in thrall, also, to Venice. Unfortunately, through omniscience, we know rather more about Raikes's situation

than Raikes does. Even so, because the novel has lost some of its coherence by this point, when Raikes does reconcile himself to her, goes to her isolated islet and watches her 'pale gold, glistening form emerge' like Aphrodite from the sea, we do not know if she is meant to be redeemed, redeeming or merely wet.

All the same, Unsworth's lovingly detailed Venice resonates with all her old beauty, her old desolate hints that time will not have a stop. She saves *Stone Virgin*. Whether or not her presence in the text will help to save Simon Raven's **The Face of the Waters** it may be too soon to tell. The novel is part two of a sequence entitled *The First-born of Egypt* and carries into the 1980s the milieu and much of the cast of *Alms for Oblivion*, Raven's earlier series, which centres, as does this volume, on gay, broke, petty, disfigured Fielding Gray.

Not much can be said. The huge cast of characters spend much of the book telling each other the story of previous novels in the sequences. Most of what actually happens in *The Face of the Waters* is also told to one character (or a party of them) by some other character. We are very much in the middle of something and it is not yet time to say what. The flaccidity is ominous, though, and the omnipresent regret for things past seems moribund. And Venice, poor Venice, is merely raddled.

It wouldn't be kind to expatiate, either, on Fay Weldon's new collection of stories. Like a series of snapshots, **Polaris and Other Stories** affords glimpses, somewhat overexposed and flattened into terrified anonymity, into the lives of the sort of characters this author handles more convincingly at novel length. The best story in the book, 'Polaris', is the longest and makes more of its Scottish submarine base setting than the others make of London; it could easily be expanded novelwards. The rest sparkle harshly through Weldon's sharp, clear, engaging narrative voice; not one tale fails to hammer home a sense of isolation with no exit. There are many husbands and wives and lovers in the book, but almost none of them likes one another much; there are no friends. Twisted by the world into which they must fit with such terror, women constantly betray one another, though violence waits mostly in the wings.

As it is made up of stories dating from as early as 1941, Peter Taylor's new collection, **The Old Forest**, may be the best possible introduction to this American writer, whose tales of the northern borderlands of the Old South are among the more impressive accomplishments of 20th-century fiction.

Families from the South come north to settle in Tennessee, in cities like Memphis or Nashville, and most of Taylor's stories are about the maintenance there of something like civilisation in the jungles of entrepreneurial America. But that is too simple by far. His best tales are couched as reminiscences whose seeming tranquillity is utterly deceptive. Taylor may be deeply empathetic with the fragile mores of his transplanted ladies and gentlemen, but in his quiet way can be a satirist of the most taxing severity. Not one story fails to begin gently; not one fails by its close to have interrogated the very basis of the lives depicted. A humane, moral, important book. □

FILMS

Second-hand shop

Francis Wheen

Brewster's Millions (PG)

Plaza

L'Addition (18)

Classic, Tottenham Court Road

IN RECENT YEARS it has sometimes seemed that Richard Pryor's idea of comedy is that if you repeat the word 'motherfucker' often enough people will laugh at it. This was certainly the point of *Richard Pryor Here and Now*, the last of his films that I had the misfortune to catch.

I was rather pleased to learn, then, that his new movie was to have such things as a *script* and a *plot* and *other actors* instead of being yet another 90 minutes of misogynist monologue delivered to a hysterical, drug-raddled audience. I even ventured to hope that the word 'motherfucker' might be left out altogether.

And my hopes were fulfilled. Pryor doesn't utter the dread word once. That, however, is the only thing that can be said in favour of **Brewster's Millions**. During the course of the film I laughed three times, but that was merely in an attempt to keep myself awake.

It feels like the kind of film one has seen a dozen times before, which is probably because one *has* seen it a dozen times before. This is, after all, the seventh screen version of George Barr McCutcheon's novel, which was published in 1902. There have also been a stage play and a Broadway musical.

The story, you may recall, is that a born loser called Montgomery Brewster inherits a fortune (\$300 million in this inflation-indexed version) from a long-lost relation. Or, rather, he will

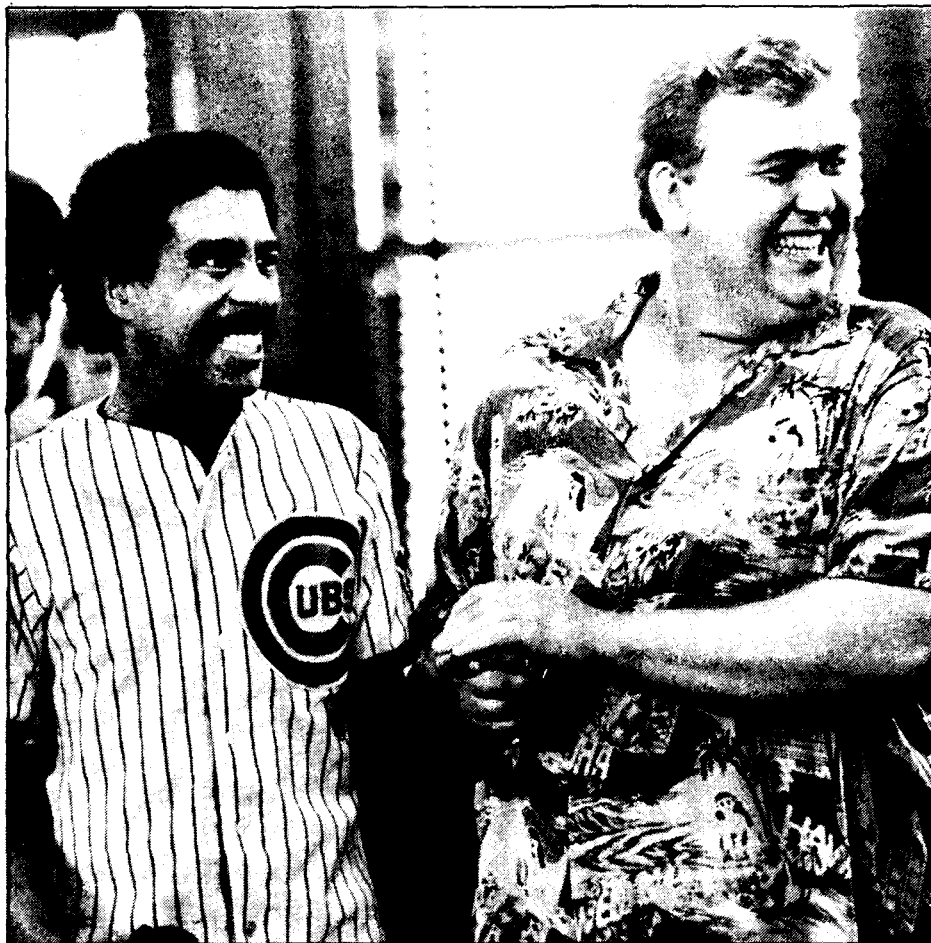
Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

Birdy Eloquent images, inspired technique, skin-tight performances give brave lift-off to allegory-flecked adventures in blue-collar Philly of ornithological obsessive (Matthew Modine) and butch buddy (Nicolas Cage), later traumatised by Vietnam. Alan Parker's most sympathetic venture since *Bugsy*.

The Purple Rose of Cairo Woody Allen's brilliantly faceted, sad-funny fantasy, as relevant to our depressed Eighties as its Depression Thirties. Actor in idiot flick descends from New Jersey screen briefly to woo movie-mad, downtrodden housewife, making chaos and whoopee. (Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels).

Witness Australian director Peter Weir in finetuned control of offbeat US thriller. Rugged but honest city policeman (Harrison Ford), grudgingly harboured from bent colleagues by time-warped Amish farmers, shares unconsummated love with Kelly McGillis's superb widow until the inevitable, estranging shoot-out.



Richard Pryor shares a scripted smile with another actor

inherit it if he can spend a smaller fortune (\$1 million in earlier adaptations, \$30 million in this one) within 30 days. The catch is that he mustn't tell anyone why he is spending all this money in such a hurry, and he isn't allowed to acquire any assets: at the end of the 30 days his only worldly goods must be the clothes he stands up in. He goes on an almighty binge and when the time is up, despite a few close shaves, he has passed the test.

The only point in filming the story in the mid-1980s, it seems to me, would be to make some observations on contemporary consumerism gone mad. But director Walter Hill does nothing of the kind. Brewster is played with predictable pop-eyed innocence by Pryor, and the ways in which he sheds most of his loot are unimaginative, uninteresting and dated.

There is a similarly antique air about the 'romantic interest'. Brewster conceives a passion for the woman who is assigned to keep a tally of his expenses (Lonette McKee) but she spurns him at first. She is a walking cliché — prim, bespectacled and with her hair tightly pinned up. When she does finally succumb, she ditches her glasses and lets her hair down to reveal (yawn yawn) that the blue-stocking camouflage concealed a beautiful woman. Yuk.

L'Addition is a failure, too, but a more complicated one. It is the tale of a French actor, Bruno Winckler (played by the darkly handsome Richard Berry, fresh from *La Balance*), who through spur-of-the-moment gallantry — otherwise known as lust — comes to the aid of an attractive female shoplifter

(Victoria Avril) by knocking over a security guard with his supermarket trolley. She gets away, and he goes to prison instead. (By the way, would a French court really jail someone for such an offence? I only ask.) While inside, he is accidentally caught up in a jailbreak: an escaping prisoner shoots a prison guard called Lorca (Richard Bohringer) in the knee, but Winckler — unjustly — once again has to take the rap for someone else's crime. He is sent on a two-year stretch to another prison; Lorca wangles a transfer for himself to the same establishment and proceeds to give Winckler a very rough time, turning the other inmates against him. Winckler eventually decides that the jail isn't big enough for both him and Lorca. One of them has to go, and one of them does.

All well and good, if a bit implausible. But the director, Denis Amar (whose second feature it is), doesn't seem to know what he wants. At times he appears to be trying to show how easily a hitherto ordinary man can become brutalised when placed in a brutal environment. The trouble is that the brutality is rather too smoothly choreographed to be convincing. In any case, it is cancelled out by the fact that the prisoners, especially Winckler, always seem to be ridiculously elegantly dressed, and the prison itself is clean and not particularly forbidding.

At other times, it appears that Amar wishes the film to be a psychological thriller about the battle of wills between Lorca and Winckler. But here, too, the director loses his nerve — most spectacularly in the happy ending, which

dissipates the effect of much of what has gone before. A pity.

Finally, a question: is it my imagination or are films getting longer these days? Of the crop on show in London at the moment *Amadeus* is 159 minutes, *A Passage To India* is 163, *Birdy* is 120, *The Cotton Club* is 127, *The Killing Fields* is 142, and so on. My feeling is that some directors have come to believe that quantity equals quality; that the longer a film is, the more 'important' it is. Some two-hour or three-hour films justify their length, but others are simply cases of self-indulgence and slack editing.

Having said which, I shall now plug three films which appear to merit their great length. Powell and Pressburger's **The Life and Times of Colonel Blimp** (165 minutes) deserves every superlative that's been bestowed on it; I beseech you to try to catch the current revival at the Electric Screen in London. Edgar Reitz's **Heimat** (15 hours, 36 minutes) opens this week for a limited season at the Camden Plaza, and next Monday Channel 4 begins its screening of Fassbinder's **Berlin Alexanderplatz** (15 hours and 21 minutes split into 14 episodes). I haven't seen either of them yet, but both have been girded with praise. I had intended to watch some preview videotapes of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* earlier this week, but a critic from *The Times* failed to return them to Channel 4 at the promised time and thus deprived me of them. Inconsiderate old sod. □

MUSIC

Quaquaversal

Andrew Clements

Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (seventh edition)

revised by NICOLAS SLONIMSKY Oxford
£95 until 31 December, £125 thereafter

GIANT TOMES of reference, particularly musical ones, generally have an impersonal feel: a clipped style aimed at compressing the maximum of information into the minimum of column inches and a committee of contributors busy ensuring that their own specialities all get fair shares of the space. *Baker's Biographical Dictionary* is a bit different.

Since it was first published in 1900 it's become something of an American institution and grown steadily to its current mammoth proportions: the seventh edition runs to 2,620 pages and more than 13,000 entries. But what has saved it from total indigestibility has been Nicolas Slonimsky's highly personal, not to say sometimes downright eccentric contributions. He has taken charge of the last three revisions and steadily larded the entries with his own extraordinary style, which never uses a monosyllable when six would do the job almost as well and mingles straightforward biographical information (which, basically, is what *Baker's* is all about) with a good deal of entirely irrelevant but entertaining trivia and unabashed gossip. ▷

The latest incarnation, published for the first time in Britain, tempers some of the wilder excesses of its predecessors. The entry for Dame Ethel Smyth was long prized by connoisseurs of Slonimskyism as the *ne plus ultra* of his art; now it has been tidied up and given a sobriety which would not seem out of place in the pages of the *New Grove*. A few unalloyed nuggets survive, however. Tippett is apostrophised as a 'brythonic' composer; it means (though I'm sure you all knew) that he was born of Celtic stock, in this case Cornish. Glenn Gould's precocity leads him to playing the piano and composing in his 'single-digit years'. Havergal Brian's music is characterised by its 'rhapsodically quaquaversal thematicism'; I didn't look up that one, but it certainly sounds more interesting than Brian's music itself ever is.

Purely as a work of reference it has a good deal going for it. The entries include rock and jazz musicians, though they appear to have been more selectively listed than their 'serious' colleagues. The coverage of contemporary composers seems particularly thorough — I spent a long time trying to catch it out, and failed; perhaps George Benjamin ought to be there, and the American Peter Lieberson, together with one or two of the younger Frenchmen, but anyone who has established any kind of reputation (and a few who haven't) consistently over the last ten years is in as far as I can tell. Performers seem a little more hit and miss. American singers do better than others: Maria Ewing, Josephine Barstow and Valerie Masterton are in, Sarah Walker and Robyn Archer are not.

For a dictionary that has become so highly personalised there is surprisingly little venom. The judgment on Barbra Streisand, that 'natural talent prevailed over a lack of general culture' is surely meant as approval, while the observation that Eric Clapton 'went into crooning, fully aware that he was no Mick Jagger' invites any number of interpretations. Slonimsky seems to operate his own cryptic classification of popularity and merit: rock musicians are either 'seeded' (Laurie Anderson) or 'top seeded' (Billy Joel); conductors may be 'great' (Von Karajan), 'celebrated' (Klemperer), 'eminent' (Colin Davis) or 'distinguished' (Charles Groves).

British readers may sometimes find the

Among this week's contributors:

Paul Roazen is Professor of Social and Political Science at York University, Toronto. His books include *Freud: Political and Social Thought*, *Sigmund Freud: Freud and his Followers* (ed.) and *Helene Deutsch: A Psychoanalyst's Life*.

John Clute co-edited *Interzone the First Anthology: New Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing*.

Richard Pankhurst was for many years Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Ababa and has written a number of books about Ethiopia.

Naseem Khan's Work in Progress column will be back next week.

standpoint of the descriptions of home-grown composers a little oblique: Maxwell Davies might think it odd to see himself described as a 'fervent political activist', while the 'folkloric trends popular in British modern music' mentioned in the entry on Birtwistle might have been more appropriate at the time of Vaughan Williams or Holst. These are very minor niggles, though, in what is and promises to continue to be a hugely useful source of information, as well as an entertaining one. My favourite snippet so far comes in Thelonious Monk's biography: 'between 1973 and 1976 he stayed with an admirer, the Baroness Nica de Koenigswarter, in her mansion in Weehawken, N.J., but was visited daily by his wife'. I'm sure the *New Grove* would never have countenanced that. □

DANCE

Cable company

Stephanie Jordan

The Kosh
Almeida
London Festival Ballet
Royal Festival Hall

IT WAS ONE of those not very enlightened Hollywood studio bosses who would advise writers with a 'message' to go to Western Union. **The Kosh**, who brought *Marked Cards* to the Not the RSC Festival, their message mostly stated through movement with occasional mime and speech, might well have taken heed. Certainly I can think of more succinct ways of arguing that our profit-oriented society produces paranoiac greed, aggression and ruination than the metaphor of the casino, the beguiling hostess and the loaded gamble.

I took the allusion of the fish hook only upon inspection of their excellent publicity. And, while the authors have a perfectly reasonable point to make, they don't measure up to the fact that it is in the particular dramatic illustration that the quality of a theatrical argument resides. Characters here suffer from inevitability: the cardsharp (Mechanic) in fur coat grins like a mask of comedy, and triumphs; a fop with received pronunciation (Little General) suffers for being idle rich, as does a Bride with a dummy Groom for being foolish. There is a Coffee Boy who does nothing but look conspiratorial and most of the action is an untidy romp with much bawling, insipid movement language and choreographic patterns occasionally numbered by sub-circus acrobatic formations. There wasn't much more to it, but it lasted 70 minutes.

For those seeking the indulgence of spirit rather than conscience there are the problems of Swanilda's jealousy and her fiancé Franz's fascination with a clockwork doll in *Coppelia*. Ronald Hynd's production for **Festival Ballet** is merry and full of jokes, some of which spoil the action. The explosion from Dr Coppelius' workshop in Act I and the resultant shower of

cogs and dolls' limbs make the kids laugh but render inexplicable Swanilda's persistent bewilderment at the rival for Franz's affections seated immobile at the window. Then there's Alexander Grant's amiable Coppelius, terribly conciliatory and not a jot rancorous in Act III, despite Swanilda's having ruined his life's work and proved herself an undoubted cow. Classical ballet needn't be quite so comfortable, nor does it need such a gingerbread set as Desmond Heeley's ultra-rococo Galician village.

The most secure dancing on opening night came from Mary Mckendry as Dawn in the final *divertissement*, rather than from the leads. Though we make allowances for her extreme youth, Katherine Healy has unstretched, turned-out legs, her footwork is blurred and her back doesn't speak at all. She is capable of learning from coaching (witness her fine Juliet for Ashton) but I doubt the sense of pushing her into such a demanding first season, allowing her no time to consider the structure of what she has to dance. Raffaele Paganini proves a fairly racy Franz, prone to leap crazily with helicopter legs, but audiences do seem to appreciate such antics. The company aims at popular repertoire rather than finesse.

Romeo & Juliet is another matter. It is encouraging careful application from its various casts, for instance Lucia Truglia and Matz Skoog, although Truglia is rather too knowing for the innocent at the beginning of the work. The wide, shallow stage of the RFH suits the ballet with its mock-mediaeval costumes.

I'm beginning to see how finely paced Ashton's ballet is. His treatment of Act I is urgent, sometimes despite Prokofiev — witness the brilliant *batterie* set against the ponderous Knights' Dance. Then, effective by virtue of contrast, Ashton gives time to the later, most poignant involvements of the lovers. Interesting too how he draws drama out of the romantic triangle, with Paris made flesh and blood, clever in his dancing and noble in his courtship. □

THEATRE

Brutish

Rosalind Carne

Frikzhan
MARIUS BRILL *Young Vic Studio*
The Desert Air
NICHOLAS WRIGHT *The Pit*
El Senor Galindez
EDUARDO PAVLOVSKY *Gate*

POWER IS CENTRAL to all three plays, and the nastiness that emerges as men squabble for supremacy makes pretty unpleasant viewing. Only **Frikzhan** offers a vision of hope, transposing a thirst for revenge into a sudden unexpected burst of compassion and forgiveness.

If it is true that a young writer's most precious possession is the strength of his ideas, the future looks bright for this 20-year-old winner of the Texaco/National Youth Theatre playwrighting

competition. Style is his weakness, as his two characters struggle for expression, occasionally lapsing into cliché or somewhat tortuous imagery. But conviction, energy and a highly-charged scenario keep the piece constantly alive.

A black social security officer is investigating the fraudulent claim of an ex-policeman and we come to know them both intimately thanks to Mr Brill's assured grasp of dramatic confrontation and deeply felt performances from Dhobi Newman and Niall Refoy, directed by Mike Afford. True, there are wobbly patches when the actors almost lose possession of their roles and, as with most inexperienced players, they appear more comfortable with outbursts of violent emotion than with moments of withdrawal. But in startling contrast to the more polished efforts of the Royal Shakespeare Company in the Pit, these two manage to touch an audience's heart.

Part of the problem for the RSC is that it is hard to judge the mood of Nicholas Wright's sprawling, complex work. Adrian Noble's direction is as sharp and inventive as ever, but *uncomfortably mannered*. Set in wartime Egypt, **The Desert Air** focuses on the obsessional lust for promotion of a bullying, foul-mouthed lower-middle-class officer known as The Hippo. The nickname is as revealing of the *Boy's Own* world of the British services as it is of its owner. And while his stratagems draw the staff of Dangerous Operations Groundforce into a web of intrigue stretching from Cairo to the battlefields of Yugoslavia, we are never far from the playing fields of Eton. In fact it all feels a long way from the Middle East (though a comic taxi driver in a fez gets a few laughs in a scene worthy of any of the weaker *Carry On* efforts).

British foreign policy is revealed as a dishonourable mixture of opportunism and personal vendettas and, though there is undoubted craft in the manipulation of the historical material, the cumulative effect of the succession of brief scenes is distant and bewildering. For all the swagger and aggression of Geoffrey Hutchings's performance as The Hippo, the action speaks to itself rather than to the audience.

It is never easy to arouse concern with a totally unlikeable central character, but Mr Hutchings makes it even more difficult with the extravagance of his strutting and braying. Military caricature may offer a fair mirror image of reality, but it arouses little more than mild irritation.

Finally, at the Gate, the enterprising management have taken even greater risks in audience alienation by importing **El Señor Galindez**, an Argentinian horror-show about the making of a torturer. It's hard not to feel some pretty strong reactions when staring at a naked woman hanging upside down on a dentist's chair while a smiling youth prepares to do unspeakable things to her nipples. According to the playwright Eduardo Pavlovsky, the yearning to mutilate fellow human beings arises from a combination of unemployment, sexual sadism and the longing to surrender personal responsibility. He raises interesting issues, undoubtedly, but never engages our imagination or intellect sufficiently to justify his pornographic display. □

New Statesman 16 August 1985



Put on the spot under Section 13

Michael Lewis

THE FIRST THING I noticed was that I was being stared at by Her Majesty the Queen. She was nailed to the wall and smiling at me with a look of gracious benevolence which contrasted strongly with the humourless features of the interrogating inspector. While the portrait of the Queen radiated the sort of warmth you would expect from a cheap example of 'Royalist Realism', the inspector seated before me plainly belonged to that class of person which believes everybody to be guilty until proven innocent, and even then probably still guilty. Had it been the Queen on duty that day 'spot checking' incoming passengers from Northern Ireland under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, I'm sure I would have been given some tea and biscuits. But all this inspector wanted to give me was a hard time.

I had just disembarked at Stranraer from Belfast and was looking forward to getting back home to Edinburgh, where I then lived. I had no reason to anticipate any hiccups in transit, and could not at first fathom why I had been singled out of the queue and brought into this bare little chamber. I was engaged, after all, on what is constitutionally regarded as a domestic passage within the British Realm.

In practice, the 'domesticity' of such a passage is highly questionable; Britain remains the only European state this side of the Warsaw Pact where the right of internal movement is circumscribed by a piece of legislation, in this case the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Although Ireland is not explicitly referred to in the Act, it requires no great leap of the imagination to understand that in the British context 'prevention of terrorism' has a very definite Irish focus. The original Act was ushered through Parliament in 1974 in the wake of the Birmingham pub bombings and gave the Home Secretary, as well as the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, the power to 'exclude' British nationals from travelling from one part of the Kingdom to another. In effect, it sanctifies a system of domestic deportation and by so doing implies that perhaps Northern Ireland is not as integral a part of our 'United' Kingdom as the Whitehall rhetoricians would have us think.

'Excuse me sir, but I wonder if you could possibly step this way,' a police sergeant enquired with that show of disingenuous respect which, of course, meant 'come with me'. Almost immediately I felt an

TELEVISION

Andrew Rissik Apocalypse

uncomfortable quivering of the diaphragm as I was led through a throng of curious passengers. Although innocent of just about every conceivable offence you'd care to name, other than the odd 'thought crime' occasionally committed in the privacy of my own room, it was unnerving, even terrifying, to be singled out for special attention by the apparatus of the state, and all in the cause of preventing terror. The sergeant obviously regarded me as a lowly thing, little better than a dog dropping on a pavement, and I rather felt like one.

The room I found myself in looked as though it had been designed for sensory deprivation research. It was small, nobody had thought to put in any windows, there were two chairs, a regulation Home Office synthetic wooden table and only the postcard picture of the sovereign on the wall to brighten the place up. It was quite cheerful until the inspector entered. He was a gentleman of saturnine aspect who would have been more at home in a kennel than a policeman's uniform.

Under Section 13 of the Act, the police are allowed to take an arbitrary interest in anybody who dares to travel between the two major islands of the British archipelago. These 'spot checks' are ordinarily informal affairs but can also be very harrowing, depending, I suspect, on whether the policeman you're dealing with had a good night's sleep or not. This one must have been an insomniac.

The inspector probed me about the purpose of my visit to Belfast, the sorts of antics I had got up to while I was there and, most threateningly, whether I had any 'strong opinions' about the 'general situation' as he put it. At that moment I became the voice of moderation, trying so desperately to sound like an opinionless cretin that I could have been taken for a member of the SDP. I calculated that this was probably the most cunning way of winning the officer's favour.

But the worst feature of the cross-examination was the growing feeling that, although I wasn't guilty of anything, the inspector might perceive me to be so. Except to those who have been through a similar situation, it's impossible to convey the atmosphere of ultimate suspicion, the sense that you're lying even when you're telling the truth. I can now understand why old Bolsheviks confessed to mythical crimes in Stalinist Russia and even here, in the south-west of Scotland, I almost felt that I might sign any confession the inspector wanted me to.

He peered at me in silence for what seemed an unnaturally long time while fingering the small white 'immigration' card which I, like all travellers between Northern Ireland and 'mainland' Britain, had to fill out after landing at Stranraer. Fortunately, I resisted the temptation to let my mouth incriminate me and managed to sit as silently as my opposite number.

'All right, Mr Lewis, you can go,' he said finally with a nod of the head.

I tactfully withdrew, my liberty still intact, and nearly thanked the policeman for deciding that I was not worth detaining. No apologies, no farewells, but on my part a surge of relief and even momentary affection for somebody who, for maybe ten minutes, had held me as his own personal hostage. □

THIS WEEK, in a pedestrian American film called *Enola Gay* (C4), Bobby Ewing got tough and dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. On Friday night, in a satirical compilation job entitled *The Atomic Café* (C4), the Hydrogen Bomb exploded above middle America and a child, cycling to school, dived off his bike and pulled his jacket fearlessly over his head. 'That flash means act fast,' said the anonymous commentator in a business-like, bubblegum sort of voice.

In a rather dull oratorio by Michael Berkeley and Ian McEwan, *Or Shall We Die?* (C4), someone asked, rather grandly, 'Are there men unafraid of gentleness?' — the answer to which is yes, lots, but they don't usually run for President. In *The Atomic Café* a young, clean, direct, truthful and honest-looking man called Richard Nixon told us with a radiant smile that America's principle problem was mental health. And, after watching a vividly horrifying documentary called *The Nuclear Holocaust: A Scientific Forecast* (C4), there seemed to be no other answer to McEwan's rhetorical 'Or Shall We Die?' than a plain and simple 'yes'.

In its own sequence of programmes to mark the 40th anniversary of Hiroshima, Channel Four countered the BBC's blend of drama and debate with history, science and fact. *The Nuclear Holocaust: A Scientific Forecast* was made by Japanese television and won last year's Prix Italia for Best Documentary. Essentially a work of terrifying but informed conjecture, it was no routine mixture of talking heads and familiar newsreel footage. Instead — through an incredible mastery of special effects and dramatic technique — it took us on a journey into the heart of a putative nuclear inferno.

Taking as its premise the explosion of a one-megaton bomb above Tokyo, this programme made us awestruck spectators at Armageddon. Whole urban landscapes erupted in a searing holocaust of flying glass, molten steel and billowing debris. Motorways and railroads on which we could glimpse people travelling were engulfed by a great pulse of light and obliterated. Later, black rain fell with chilling, prosaic realism, to be followed by the snowfall of atomic ash and the bleak, paralysing finality of the predicted thermo-nuclear winter. Again and again we returned to the visceral horror of detonation and the frozen hell of annihilation. Above all, it did what drama seems unable to do. It gave us the vast scale and terrible perspective of ultimate, global destruction. At its end, humankind was extinct.

Despite an arsenal of statistics and much grave scientific speculation, it is the sulphurous operatic majesty of this programme's image of apocalypse that has so disquieted me. Like many viewers I am quite ready to be told, in a sober-blooded way, what the size and extent of our last ending will be. But I am unused to seeing it graphically depicted and the emotive visual terror of this situation compels and

disturbs in a way that spoken description and the written word cannot. This is the absolute pictorial horror to which Breughel, Bosch and John Martin were leading and, in previous centuries, religion could have named it for us and found some corner of our philosophy in which it might have been comprehended.

Unwittingly, perhaps, this programme destroyed much of the emotional comfort that is derived from a direct political espousal of the cause of disarmament. In scientific terms, disarmament solves none of the fundamental problems and it is, at best, a mere stop-gap measure, a desperate gesture of good faith in the ability of humanity to control the technological destiny with which atom physics now confronts us. The idiocy of the nuclear age is the continuing insistence that weapons must be bettered, expanded, enlarged, multiplied. There is no sense — as scientists have pointed out — in relentlessly adding to a weaponry that technology has long declared superfluous. If the missiles from five Polaris submarines can bring about a nuclear winter — as *The Nuclear Holocaust: A Scientific Forecast* claimed that they could — any further infatuation with mass destruction simply increases the risk for no appreciable strategic gain. But we live in a world where the diplomacy of nuclear war is a hazardous affair of national pride. The Labour Party, committed to disarmament, loses votes because this stance is thought to be 'unrealistic'. The voters seem to want a government that recognises belligerence and tackles it head on. The posture is the thing.

It is the paradox of science that, while it increases our material capacity for good, it multiplies proportionately the scale of human evil. We were relatively secure when purely physical limitations contained and confined the ferociousness of our lust, greed and cruelty. But Hitler and Stalin were scientific villains who could translate their bloodiest impulses into what was effectively a mechanical equation. It became possible to order and systematise murder on a grand scale and the technology which allowed it to be committed by proxy cushioned the power-wielders from a squalid, ugly and unwholesome physical proximity. Science made genocide a problem to be indulged in with a theorist's logic, calm and equanimity. It is this shift that presumably made it possible for scientists to admire the formal perfection of the Hydrogen Bomb.

In the end, saturated by two weeks of nuclear television, I am inclined to think that, since it is science that has got us into this, it is up to science to get us out. The late 20th century is a time of immense spiritual arrogance. We feel no need to believe in a God because we perceive no longer any mystery in material reality. And, with the Bomb, we appear to be saying, 'Anything God can do, we can do better.' It is often said that, during the last 40 years, the Bomb has single-handedly kept the peace, which is a view that seems plausible and attractive until one considers the difficulty of maintaining this hairline balance across whole centuries. The truth is that the weapon is still very new and we are still much in awe of it. And it is possible that, in overcoming a problem whose danger is so absolute and implacable, we may be forced to take a first step toward some cultural maturity. □

Weekend competition

No 2886 Set by E. O. Parrott

Extracts, please, from interviews by Jimmy Young, Terry Wogan, Janet Street-Porter (or any other radio/TV interrogator) with God. Max. 150 words by 28 August.

No 2883 Set by Nell L. Wregible

Missed Hits.

Report

By Babe Bio

Words fale me (alrite, alrite) but seriersly, if you could see the *osher* of post-cards, lavertry paper, pages torn out of eccersise books, A4, foolscap and Basildon Bond thats fludded into the Complex, your ghaost would be at leest as flabbered as mine. (Yes! Our arkavist has checked the files: its a record number of entries — and thats with half our readers away on camping trips in Charentes!) Neadless to say, though, quite a few of you missed the point all together (*Judas Iscariot Superstar* and *Jude the Obscene*, for insterns, make the *orijinals* sound perthetic in comparison) but £3 each for the Missed Hits below and Im really sorry we couldnt print more — expeshly since some of you did the same ones, but didnt get got to til later.

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Socks But Were Afraid to Ask

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MICHAEL PICKERING

The Taming of the Vole

SERENA JOHNSON

The Importance of Being Kevin

C. J. ARTHUR

In the Flip-Flops of the Fisherman

CHRIS BOND

Lady Chatterley's Husband

CYNTHIA HALL

Lady Chatterley's Loofah

PETER FORBES

A la Recherche des Tantes Perdues

JON FERNESIDE

Romeo and Tracy

DAVE OGLESBY

Gray's Allergy

PHILIP PEACOCK

East of Sweden

JOAN & KINGSLEY HERNIMAN

Accidental Death of a Social Democrat

DAVID COLBOURNE

The Decline and Fall of the Romford Empire

M. TAYLOR

Who's Afraid of Virginia Wade?

JOHN BRENCHLEY

By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Snivelled

IAN MILES

A Burnt-Out Satchel

RALPH PEARCE

A Farewell to Elbows

E. O. PARROTT

Zen and the Art of Taking the Bike to the Garage

GILL BREENLLEW

The Prunes of Wrath

PETE & MEL LANDELLS

The Hunchback of West Ealing United Reform Church

MICHAEL GREEN

For Whom the Bell Tinkles

KATE SHORT

Slaughterhouse 5: Dresden 0

MARK GREEN

Doctor Finlay's Bookcase

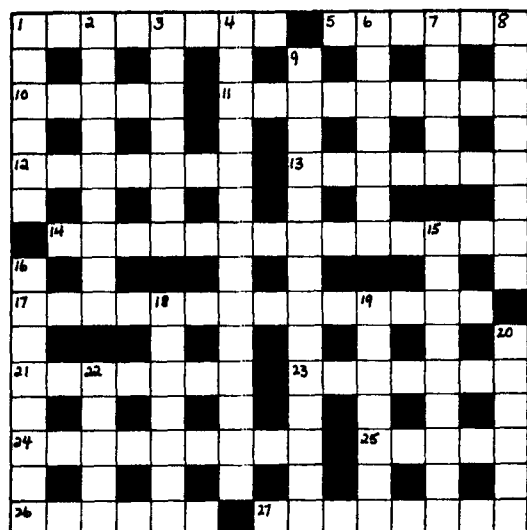
E. DUVAL

The Rabbit of the Baskervilles

WANDRHYN J. BONSO

Weekend Crossword 1489

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1489, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 27 August.



Name _____

Address _____

ACROSS

1. Animal for which two of us hold the two of us back (8)
5. Please become unconscious (6)
10. Ancient city depicted in the opposite of colour by painter (5)
11. Evil people are in at the degradation (9)
12. Appears uncomfortable as a man surrounded by legal document (7)
13. Get up again and point to a king among sailors (7)
14. Establishment which teaches one how to get on? (8,6)
17. One of these young intellectuals would make a fresh tune about the reform of a Red Guard (14)
21. I go slowly back to the vessel for the turpentine (7)
23. Love a sailor holding forth (7)
24. Reluctant about Colin being disguised in scanty clothing (9)
25. Moment when a duck includes a century (5)
26. The most learned one lives in our part of the world (6)
27. Wastes food (8)

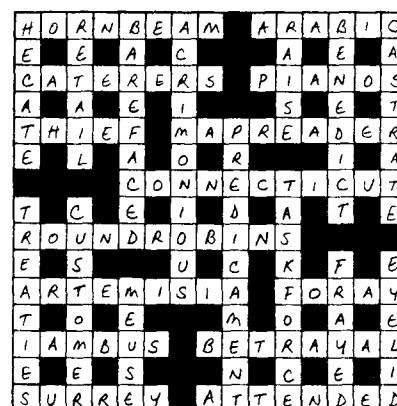
DOWN

1. Waters in which the county holds us up (6)
2. The boldness of one appearing in uncomfortable headgear (9)
3. To swot up with a woman is pedestrian (7)
4. The removal may be thrown into disorder in giant rainstorm (14)
6. The woman to ring up has something of a veneer (7)
7. Injection which gives the last word back to the east (5)

8. Make regular journeys without shelter and in the open (8)
9. The following ethereal deity married a different benefactress (14)
15. Not often about to live and die in submission (9)
16. Stop a depression in the house (8)
18. Concerned with the sound of peace, puts his kit together again (7)
19. Sat about without a victory when in opposition (7)
20. Monstrous female who puts an end to advances (6)
22. Beastly places in which liberal manners are displayed (5)

SET SQUARE

Solution to 1487



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APPOINTMENTS VACANT

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has a short-term vacancy for a

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There is a short-term vacancy for a research officer in the Research Department. The post will last until 29 August 1986.

Included in the responsibilities for this post will be such policy areas as food, agriculture and the rural areas. In addition, there will be more general responsibilities, particularly relating to economic and industrial issues arising from the jobs and industry campaign. Duties will include the preparation of research and other papers; the provision of background and campaign information to all sections of the Party; and the servicing of advisory committees of the the National Executive Committee.

This is a re-advertisement and previous applicants need not re-apply.

THE LABOUR PARTY

has a vacancy for a

RESEARCH OFFICER

(Research Department)

The Labour Party is soon to launch a major campaign around the themes of rebuilding the welfare state and caring in the community. The research officer appointed to this post will play a key role in this campaign — through, for example, the provision of background and campaign information and the further development of policy in this crucial area.

Applicants should have experience, knowledge and understanding of social policy issues, including the NHS, personal social services and social security. Duties will include the preparation of research and briefing papers and servicing advisory committees of the National Executive Committee.

For both posts, a background of activity in the Party, and in the wider Labour movement, would be of considerable advantage. An Honours Degree, though not essential, would be an advantage.

The salary range for the above vacancies is £10,910-£12,665 p.a., (including London Weighting Allowance) depending on experience in a similar capacity.

Application forms and further details are available from: the Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Telephone 01-703 1064. The closing date for applications is Friday 6 September 1985.

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer.

MEMBERS SUPPORT SERVICES

Haringey is an outer London borough with inner city problems, which still await adequate recognition by central Government. The Council is grappling with severe problems of homelessness, unemployment and poverty, and striving to meet the wide-ranging needs of a multi-ethnic community. This is made increasingly difficult by rate-capping, cuts in Rate Support Grant and capital allocations, and the threats of GLC abolition and privatisation.

To assist elected Members in dealing with these challenges, the Council is improving its Member support services. Recognition is being given both to the policy-making responsibilities of the Majority Group and to the information needs of Members as a whole.

Principal Committee Secretary

PO2: £11,916-£12,900 including £627 p.a. London

Weighting (pay award pending) —

Reference MS/LO2

Within the Committee Division, an additional post of Principal Committee Secretary is to be established. You will work closely with the Members' Secretariat and will service meetings of the Majority Group and related bodies, and meeting called by the Leader and other leading Members. You will be responsible for such meetings and the administrative follow-up and progress-chasing required to ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken.

Members' Information Officer

PO1: £11,373-£12,219 including £627 p.a. London

Weighting (pay award pending) —

Reference MS/PR4

You will establish a members' library and an information bulletin for all Members of the Council, which will be a digest of a wide range of internal and external research and documents; be responsible for the Members' Handbook; provide briefings for Members on key issues; and provide and supervise training courses for Members. Familiarity with Members' information requirements in a London borough, and experience in dealing with Members' on a day to day basis are important qualifications for this post, which will be based in the Council's Press & Publicity Unit.

Administrative Assistant

Scale 4: £7,212-£7,986 p.a. including £627 p.a.

London Weighting (pay award pending) —

Reference MS/LO1

A small Members' Secretariat has been established, primarily to give direct support to the Leader of the Council and to the Majority Group. You will provide secretarial and admin. support to the Secretariat, particularly typing, filing and general office management.

People from black and minority ethnic groups are under-represented in the Council's workforce, and applications from them will therefore be particularly welcomed. In relation to the second and third posts, women are under represented at this level and their applications will therefore be particularly welcomed.

For application form and job description please phone 881 6055 (24-hour answering service) quoting reference above.

CLOSING DATE: 30 August 1985.

Haringey

Progress with humanity



Haringey is an equal opportunity employer. We welcome your application which will be considered on merit, irrespective of race, marital status, sex or any disability you may have.

NCU

National Communications Union

VACANCIES ASSISTANT SECRETARIES

APPLICATIONS are invited for two Assistant Secretary vacancies which have arisen in the National Communications Union.

One of the above vacancies will be in the Union's Legal Aid Department therefore legal qualifications will be an added advantage for this post. The other vacancy is on general organisation and negotiating work.

The salary scale is £16,102 (plus Outer London Weighting of £685) rising by two increments to £17,073 (plus Outer London Weighting). There is a contributory superannuation scheme in operation with a normal retirement age of 60 years.

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained by written request from the General Secretary, National Communications Union, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, London W5 1AW.

The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is by first post on Friday 6 September 1985.

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agt), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW17 1LT. 01-828 8345.

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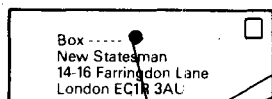
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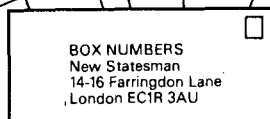
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LISTINGS

THURS 8 AUG

LONDON Memorial picket for Victoria
Mxenge and others killed by S. African
apartheid regime 5.30-7.30pm outside S.
African Embassy, Trafalgar Sq, WC2. Bring
flowers & wreaths. Org. City of London AA
Grp. 01-837 6050.

LONDON 'We have a dream' — record of
Women's Peace Songs now available at
£6.25 per copy (incl. p&p) from 'One World
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SAT 17 AUG

LONDON Women Only Music Workshop
10.30-1pm Rhythm; 2pm-5pm PA & Sound
Equipment. 7.30pm Concert with OVA.
Adm. £2/£1 UB40 at Harmond Community
Centre, Ferdinand St, NW1. Disabled
access. Details: 01-341 4967.

MON 19 AUG

HARINGEY Banned BBC film 'Real Lives'
will be shown at 7.30pm at the Civic Centre,
High Rd, Wood Green, N22. Guest spkrs. on
censorship and situation in Ireland. Adm.
Free. Org. Haringey Council/Campaign for
Press & Broadcasting Freedom.

FORTHCOMING

24-26 AUG AYLESHAM, Kent. Bank
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Details: Roger Gates, 28 Harcourt Drive,
Canterbury, Kent CT2 8DP. 0227 459676.

END AUG LONDON European Nuclear
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cabinets, typewriters. Offers to Moira or

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding
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is interested should send
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plus address and telephone
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Vicky Hutchings,
Art Editor,
New Statesman,
14-16 Farringdon Lane,
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attitudes, family and community structure, ethnic relations and political
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dimension of this study and fieldwork will be located in the Coventry labour
market.

For further details and an application form, 'phone **0203 24011 ext. 2499** or
write to: **the Secretary for Graduate Studies, Department of Sociology,**
University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

The closing date for applications is: **Wednesday, 4 September 1985.**

MEETINGS

KRISHNAMURTI: the well-known revolutionary religious speaker and educator, will be holding public talks and discussion meetings at Brockwood Park Educational Centre, Bramdean, nr Alresford, Hants, at 11.30 a.m. on 24, 25, 27, 29, 31 August and 1 September. No tickets needed. For details of train and coach arrangements from London, please telephone Bramdean 228.

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ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT male, divorced, reprographics ace, HND, 33, house trained, great looks, likes theatre, books, kids: seeks female partner, status, race immaterial. London/surrounding areas. Box (33)1337.

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DEVON: MATURE, intelligent, nature loving male, wide range of interests, no car, own home, free agent. Hopefully seeks for a compatible female. Box (33)1314.

EX-ACADEMIC MALE, 59, no geographic or other ties, own house (Hampshire), science/arts background, broad cultural, recreational, political interests, seeks good-humoured woman for stable relationship. Box (33)1338.

EDUCATED FOREIGN lady, 40s, British, would like to meet educated, professional Englishman. Age no bar. All answers will be treated confidentially. Box (33)1336.

GRADUATE MAN, 46, divorced single parent, supports Amnesty, Green Peace, enjoys music, theatre, seeks female for caring relationship. Lives Burton-on-Trent, but mobile. Box (33)1300.

HAPPY, SANE man, 42, non-smoker, non-sexist, based North West, but travels extensively, seeks woman to share his interests in politics, cinema, theatre, travelling. Box (33)1301.

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N. HERTS n/s Sunday Club for bored singles: the arts, nature etc. Box (33)1304.

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London N5 2DB.

OXFORD AREA: undergraduate male (electrician by trade), 29, non-smoker. I would like to meet a lady for sharing, fun, but sincere relationship. Box (33)1328.

PERSONABLE, SINCERE, sensitive male undergraduate, 23, interested in literature, classical music and arts generally, desires intelligent, attractive female, 20s, seeking equality/fun/relationship. Photo appreciated. London. Box (33)1329.

PRESENTABLE ENGLISHMAN, 37, well-travelled, eclectic tastes, wants to meet nice female. Age/looks unimportant. Preferably London area. Music, books, politics, travel, sun? Box (33)1332.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 40, graduate, lively, affectionate, many interests include: travel, theatre, music, food: needs similar man older/younger (over 21). Conventional hetero/gay scenes have not produced the right mate: not handsome but attractive & looks younger (he's told!). Central Scotland. Box (33)1307.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 40, interested in films, theatre and the arts, would like to meet a woman, over 26, with similar tastes. Box (33)1341.

SINGLE WOMAN, 35, with baby, seeks lasting relationship with kind, sincere, non-sexist man. Interests: ecology, CND, arts, walking, countryside. Lincs/Yorks. Box (33)1311.

SOS! Cynical, separated socialist (m., 42), seeks solace with sensitive soulmate/saviour from solitude and sloth. S. London/Surrey/Sussex. Likes: pop/movies/walking/children/animals. Box (33)1312.

(SUSSEX/KENT/SURREY). Bibliophile, academic/art interests, enjoying woodland work, home, food, driving, motor-cycling, tall, slim, energetic, mobile, unusual. Seeking attractive, uncomplicated woman, enjoying life. Modigliani rather than Renoir, although Renoir skins are delectable. Photograph returned, letters answered. Best wishes. Box (33)1333.

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU (Heather Jenner), 124 New Bond St, W1. 01-629 9634. Individual attention.

32 YEAR-OLD graduate, single, 5' 7", slim, from London but now living, working and somewhat lonely in Midlands, seeks female companion. Derbyshire or nearby. Box (33)1313.

UNEMPLOYED MALE, 29, quite ordinary, interested books, music, cinema, art, conversation, CND, seeks female for friendship, possibly serious relationship. Manchester area. Box (33)1247.

UNATTACHED PROFESSIONAL man, 40s, seeks caring, permanent relationship with intelligent, articulate, not unattractive professional or academic woman, mid-late 30s, interested in music, theatre, travel, sport. London area. Photo appreciated, but not essential. Box (33)1302.

VIVACIOUS, INTELLIGENT widow (young), late 40s, sense of humour, London area, non-political. Seeks genuine, unattached gentleman for friendship/companionship. Box (33)1326.

WOMAN (35), separated, seeks unattached companion (female/male), similar age, for friendship and shared interests — theatre, travel and keep fit. Coventry/West Midlands. Box (33)1339.

YOUNG MAN, 34, sincere, affectionate, reasonably attractive and intelligent, seeks similar lady for loving relationship/marriage. Likes: books, music, films, quiet life. Merseyside. Box (33)1320.